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Desert

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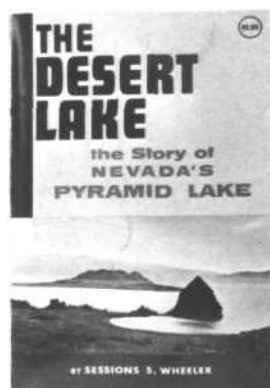


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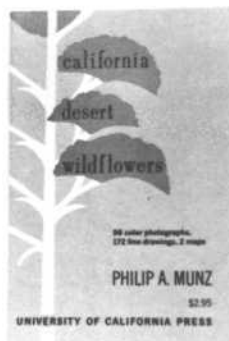
By SESSIONS S. WHEELER

The story of Nevada's intriguing Pyramid Lake, including its ancient history, archeological finds, geology, fish and bird life and what to do and see. Excellent photographs plus two detailed maps. Paperback, 131 pages.

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By PHILIP A. MUNZ

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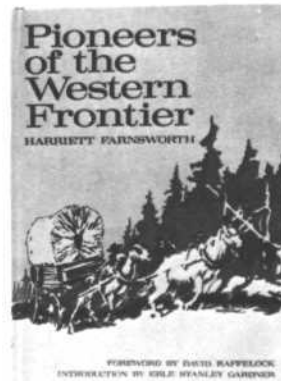
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PIONEERS OF THE WESTERN FRONTIER

By HARRIETT FARNSWORTH

The author traveled thousands of miles to interview the old-timers who give a first person account of the wild days of mining in California. Through their eyes she brings to life the world as it was way back when. Hardcover, 127 pages, illustrated.

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TRAILS AND TALES OF BAJA by Pel Carter. How a 65-year-old groom and his middle-aged bride traveled the length of Baja California in their 4-wheel drive camper is told in this warm and happy book. The author gives an insight into the loveable people of Baja along with excellent fishing advice. Anyone who has a fear of Baja or Mexico will find the true story in this couple's experiences. Full color photographs, 206 pages, paperback, \$4.80.

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WILLIAM KNYVETT PUBLISHER
JACK PEPPER EDITOR
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THE COVER:

Lower Sonoran Desert photograph by David
Organ Pipe Cactus are Muench, Santa Barbara,
silhouetted against an California. (See article
Arizona sunset in the on Page 6).

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Book Reviews

THE WEST COAST OF MEXICO

Grace Loftin, Publisher

Tadeo R. T. Brenton de H., Editor

This is more than a travel guide. It is the most complete and comprehensive book for travelers on the west coast of Mexico ever published.

Grace Loftin, publisher of the monthly *Mexico West Coast Magazine*, has lived and traveled throughout Mexico all of her life. Senor Brenton also knows his country and is an excellent writer.

The book covers the travel, history, customs, culture and fun of Baja California, Sonora, Sinaloa, Nayarit, Jalisco, Guanajuato and even has material on Mexico City and the Olympics.

Want to know something about Mexico's national drink, Tequila? What about the "witches" of Mexico? Who are the Tarahumara Indians? Where are the best places to shop and stay—and what are the prices? What about hunting and fishing? Who was "Waky Walker?"

These are only a few of the interesting

articles throughout the book which also provides complete information on the communities of Mexico, including the history and what to see, where to stay, etc.

The paid advertisements in the book are also informative as they provide the reader with a selection of hotels, motels, restaurants, shops and other services.

Even if you do not plan to visit Mexico, this book is excellent reading for its history and customs plus capturing the warmth and fun-loving spirit of our neighbors south of the border.

If you are going to tour the west coast, a combination of *Mexico Auto, Camper and Trailer Guide* by Cliff Cross (which provides detailed maps and travel information) and *The West Coast of Mexico* will provide a complete travel package. The latter is heavy, slick paperback, 11 x 9 format, profusely illustrated, 258 pages, \$6.95. The Cliff Cross Guide is also heavy paperback, 11 x 9 format, illustrated, 171 pages, \$3.50.

HISTORY OF YUMA AND THE TERRITORIAL PRISON

By Robert Woznicki

Although Yuma is used as the pivot, this interesting history covers more than the town and the prison. As the author states "Yuma's development has been influenced by all manner of people—ex-

plorers, Indian, Padres, trappers, whalers, miners, cattlemen and farmers."

This is also true of the State of Arizona, whose history is the story of early Western America. Therefore, Woznicki's book is actually a history of the West. It is a history of extreme and paradoxes in both geography and climate.

Dr. Woznicki, a professor at the Imperial Valley Campus of San Diego State College, is an author, lecturer and news commentator. He has done a great deal of research and presents his history in a well-written and interesting manner. Paperback, illustrated, 120 pages, \$2.25.

DEATH VALLEY JEEP TRAILS

By Roger Mitchell

There is a system of paved roads throughout Death Valley for passenger cars leading to the many places of interest. There is an even larger network of back country roads and washes leading to old mining camps, stamp mills, fantastic formations and other little-known areas of interest.

Roger Mitchell has been traveling, hiking and exploring the Death Valley area since he was a youngster and is considered an authority on the subject. He is a frequent contributor to *Desert Magazine*.

Although vehicular travel on off-established roads in the Monument is strictly prohibited, all of the trails covered in this book and shown on the excellent map are "established" and therefore open. The author lists a set of rules to govern travel in the Monument.

People traveling these roads should take sufficient water and food as many are isolated. But the very isolation is what most back country explorers are seeking. Since it is strictly forbidden to remove anything from the area, the old camps and mines are more intact than elsewhere.

The book is well written and is an excellent guide. Paperback, illustrated, 36 pages, \$1.00.

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JEEP TRAILS TO COLORADO GHOST TOWNS

by Robert L. Brown Illus.\$5.50

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A Peek in the Publisher's Poke

brings us peace of mind. This mood was rudely shattered recently by the news from the nearby Torres-Martinez Indian Reservation that vandals had desecrated their little cemetery containing over a 100 graves. Upon arriving at the cemetery for a ceremonial burial, it was discovered that 24 headstones had been broken, toppled or stolen. A porcelain photograph of a 115-year-old tribal matriarch, had been blasted out of its headstone. A granite stone from a fallen Marine was broken in two. What motivates people to these insane acts is more than we can understand. Our sympathy is extended to the surviving members.

DESERT Magazine takes pleasure in announcing the addition of Mr. and Mrs. James Woodard as our field representatives. Jim and Penny will be covering the western United States doing articles and chasing down interesting places to visit. Their "home on wheels" is a 27-foot Winnebago and we know you wont miss that! Stop and chat a while with them because they are real desert lovers. Jim is a retired Navy man with years of experience in survival and we are looking forward to some interesting articles.

We would like to thank the many subscribers who gave subscriptions as gifts at Christmas time. You will be pleased to know that as the result of your response to the gift program our circulation is the highest it has been since its inception. We truly appreciate your continued support and feel that we must be on the right track. Help keep us there by continuing to send in your comments and criticisms, remembering to enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope if you wish a reply. The response that we are having with the Woman's Viewpoint column leads us to believe that more than a few of our readers would welcome a subscription for Mother's Day, which is just around the corner, with the proviso of course that she let Dad have the magazine when she's through with it! We'll even sign the gift card, "With volumes of love." Ouch!!



*Jim and Penny Woodard
Field representatives*

William Woodard

IN THESE trying times of national strife about armed conflict in various parts of the world, the student unrest at some of our larger places of learning and with an apparent accent on violence in the various news media, I have become more aware of the peace and tranquility that surrounds one who is fortunate to live in the desert. Perhaps it is the soft hues of brown against a clear blue sky; the intense green of palm leaves against the beige sand; or just its vastness but to each of us who love the desert it



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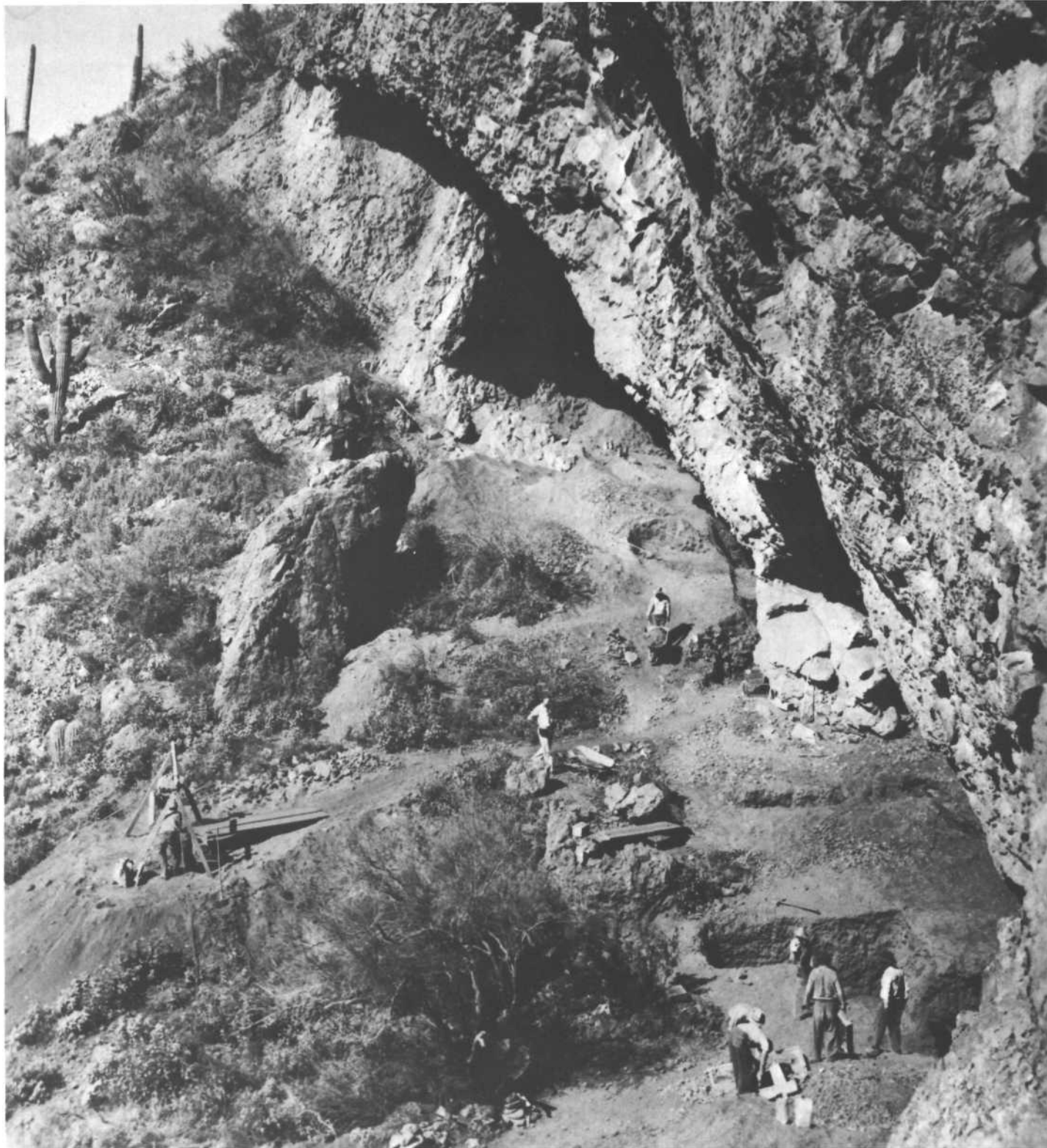
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I'll Take The Low Road

by Bernice Johnston

On our freeways you can speed at 75 miles an hour --
and stare glassy-eyed at the bumper of the car in front of you.
To really see the West take the secondary roads, such as
this "low road" from Yuma to Tucson.

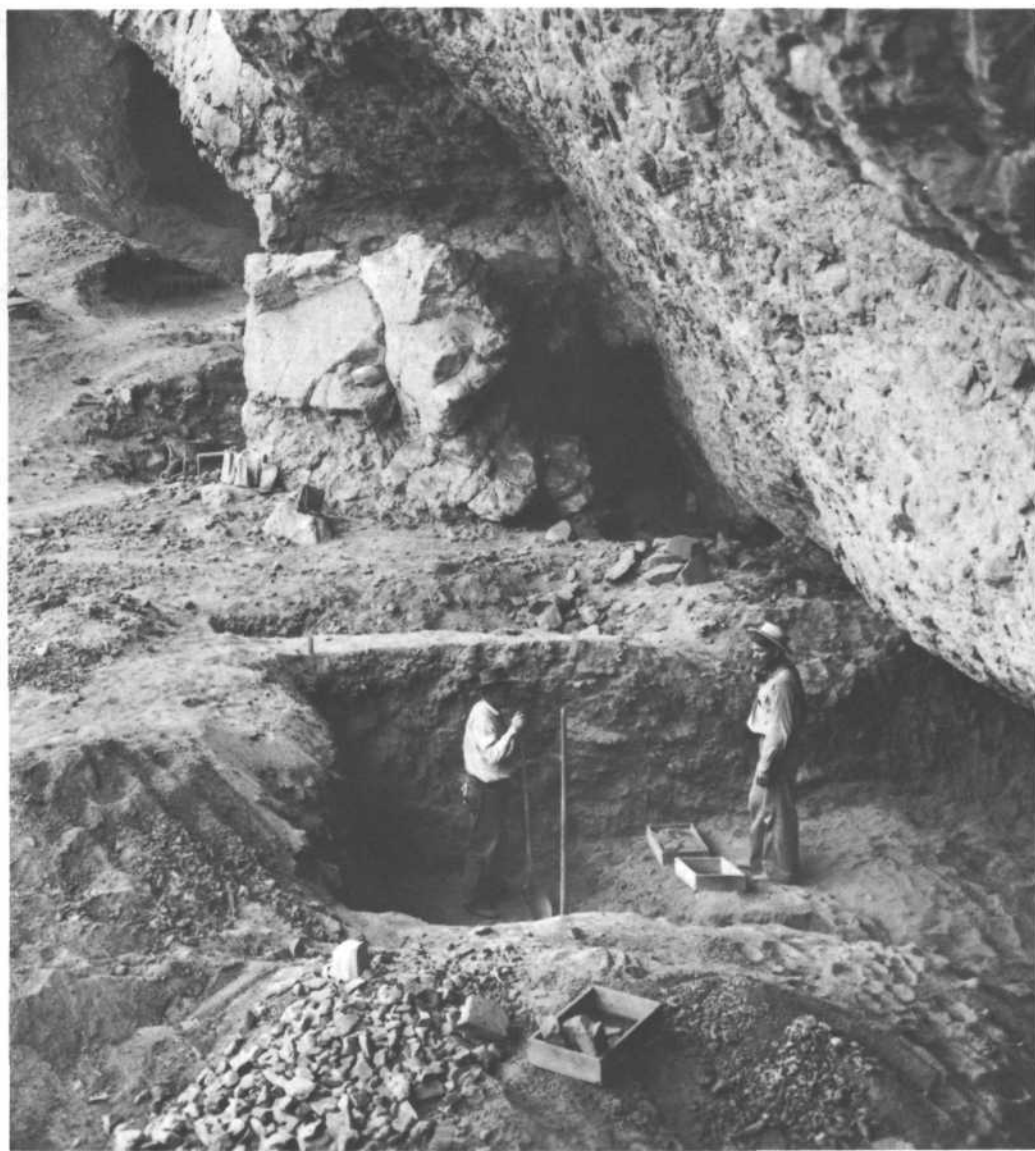
ATRIP from Yuma to Tucson can be the fastest ride through the longest nothing or it can be leisurely and interesting. If you are interested in unique scenery, unusual people, and a different way of life, travel the low road. Abandon U.S. Highway 80 at Gila Bend and turn south on State 85 to Ajo (Ah-hoe), a copper-mining town. The Papago Indians called it au'auho for "paint," obtained from colored ores. Ajo is also a Mexican word for lily bulb with the look and taste of onion or garlic. It grows in many parts of the country and in profusion here.

Ajo has the oldest copper mining history in Arizona. Spaniards mined there in the early 1700s, after which it was forgotten until its reactivation in 1854. If you have never seen an open pit mine, this is a good chance. Turn off the highway at La Mina Avenue, right again on Indian Village Road, left at Santa Ana, and you are at the observation center. The pit lies to the south.

State 86 out of Ajo runs through the largest of three Papago Indian reservations covering 2,700,000 acres. There are 7,500 Papagos living there. Papago is easily pronounced by remembering that where Mama go, Papa go.

About ten miles out of Ajo you will practically run right over a little settlement called Why. Why, "Why?" It is located at a three-way intersection that branches south to the Mexican border and which has long been referred to locally as the "Y." Maybe that's "Why."

Continued



Prehistoric men and their families lived in the Ventana Cave (opposite page) 11,000 years ago when giant ground sloths, camels and small horses roamed through Arizona. Today, archeologists (above) are excavating the cave to solve the mysteries of the past. Photos courtesy of Arizona State Museum.

The Catholic church at San Jose is probably the most unconventional in the world. Designs are a mixture of Papago, Navajo and Mexican cultures.



The right fork will take you to Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument where you may camp, picnic, sneak up on the wild life, and see some of the most unusual cacti in Arizona. If you are so inclined and prepared, cross the border and go to Rocky Point on the Gulf of California. Here you can deep sea fish, hunt shells, swim, or loaf.

Traveling east again on State 86, there are signs indicating little Indian villages which will be seen all the way to Tucson—names like Kom Vo, Vaya Chin, Hotason Vo, Hotrontk, Komolik, and even Cowlic. Just beyond the San Simon Village, saguaro cacti begin to appear. They are unique to this part of the world. While the organ pipe cactus is many-stemmed from the base, the saguaro is one big body with many arms in quite grotesque arrangements. A mature plant may weigh six to ten tons, reach 50 feet in height, have that many arms, and attain 200 years. They bloom in May and June with a crown of creamy flowers around the tip of each arm. The blossom is the Arizona state flower.

Saguaro fruit ripens in July to a cherry red. Papagos come long distances to harvest it. Each family has harvesting rights to certain areas and this is handed down through families. Fruit is picked by women with long poles made of the plant ribs. Poles are obtained when the cacti dies. The plant is a circle of ribs that is covered with spongy flesh filled with tons of water. When it dies, the flesh withers away and the skeleton falls. Fruit is eaten fresh, made into cakes and dried, boiled down to syrup on the spot, or made into wine.

Pull off the road along the way and have a look around. You can't see the desert until you leave the car. Look for the cactus wren, Arizona's state bird. It is a modest woody-brown and the largest of the wrens. It builds several nests in cacti to outwit egg-nappers. Discover the roadrunner, that long-necked, long-legged, long-tailed cuckoo, state bird of New Mexico.

Whip-like ocotillos wave red flags in spring. Although not cacti, they are at home on the desert. The palo verde, state tree of Arizona, grows

along the way. It is green-barked from trunk to branch tips. In April and May it blooms in a cascade of golden blossoms. Cacti and wild flowers carpet the way in spring.

From Ajo, it is 41 miles to the Pisinemo Village cut-off. A small sign marks a dirt road south to the right. There are several dips but it is a good graded road. After twelve miles, it forks to the right and one is in the Papago Village. Pull up behind the church and park. Pisinemo (Pi-sin'-eh-mo) means buffalo head. No buffalos ever existed in the area so where that name originated is a mystery unless somebody once lost a nickel there.

The church, San Jose, is one of the most unconventional Catholic churches seen anywhere. Fr. Camillus Cavagnaro, OFM, the pastor, has allowed the Papagos full expression in decorating it. The effect is totally Indian, typically Papago, and a triumph of integration. Visitors showing proper respect are welcomed.

The exterior of the church has geometric designs climbing up the front. The vestibule is covered with a Navajo rug with swastika designs.



*One of the many
Papago Indian homes
seen along the "low road"
from Yuma to Tucson.*



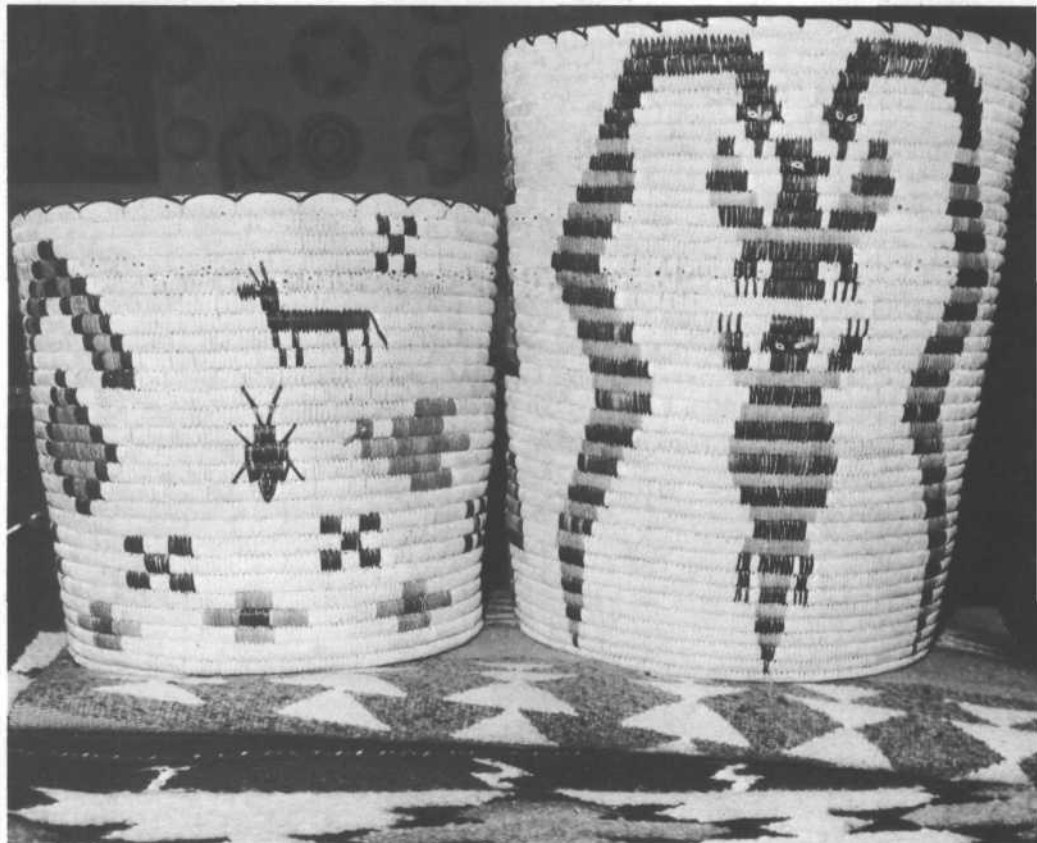
*Mrs. Kermit Lee, of the Quijotoa
Trading Post, (above) holds a large
Papago plaque with the familiar maze
design. Papago baskets (below) can
be purchased at the trading post.*

On the back wall is a Mexican painting on velvet of a suffering Christ. At Easter, beautiful swags of Papago-made paper flowers and plastic ones, perhaps from Hong Kong, dance around the sides.

Pottery designs march up and down the walls. All of these, inside and out, were painted by a young Pisinemo resident who left it unfinished when he joined the Army. A decorated gourd mobile swings from the ceiling. The Easter candle wears eagle feathers. Benches are covered with angora goat skins traded from the Navajo as was the buffalo hide on which the tabernacle rests.

The altar front and tabernacle veil are an intricacy of Tlingit Indian design (northwest coast). The bottom altar cloth is a silk screen print by an artist from Massachusetts who winters near Tucson. On the altar is a red yarn cross shape, the tsikuli of the Huichol Indians of Mexico. On the left wall is a Virgin of Guadalupe painted by an unknown artist. Behind the altar is a strange Last Supper mural by a Walapai Indian. Put all this together and you have a church that sings.

Continued





Laura Kerman, friendly Papago pottery maker, (above) displays her unusual Nativity pieces in her combination home and shop. Like other Indian crafts, her products may someday be a lost art. Margaret Manuel (right) shows her small daughter the art of weaving fine Papago baskets at Topawa Village.

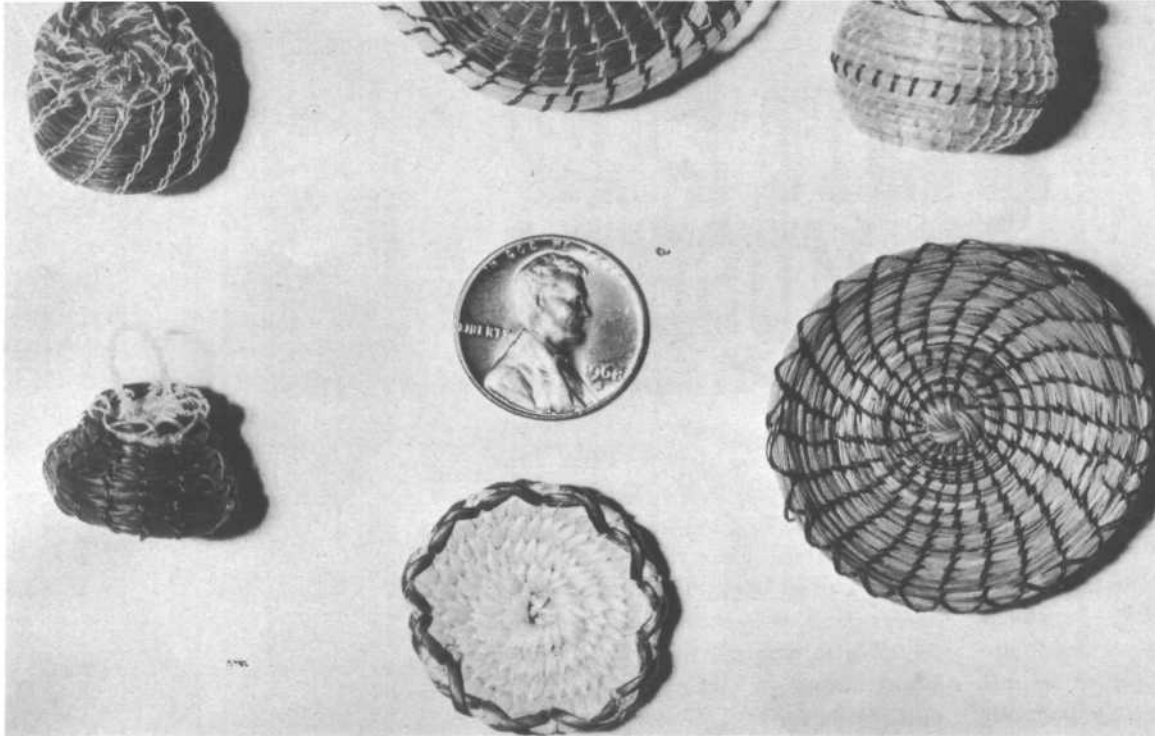


If you are lucky you may hear the Papago brass band made up of young men who blow their hearts out on beat-up second-hand instruments. Or the girls' string ensemble may be performing, if their much-used strings hold out. A craft store near the church handles lovely Papago baskets made by the women of the village. It may even be possible to meet the makers. The people are friendly but very shy.

Eight miles from the Pisinemo Road is the Quijotoa Trading Post. Quijotoa is a Spanish corruption of Kia Hoa Toak, Papago for "carrying basket mountain." The Quijotoa Mountains were mined in 1774 and again with more importance in the 1880s. The many mining towns have been turned over to ghosts.

At the trading post, Mr. and Mrs. Kermit Lee have a wonderful selection of Papago baskets and pottery. Baskets range from thumb-nail miniatures made of horsehair to waste basket size of yucca, beargrass, and martynia. Papagos buy groceries at the store and it is usually filled with shoppers.

Almost directly across from the Trading Post is a road north to Santa Rosa Village. Just west of it is Ventana Cave; and here lies some of the most ancient history in North America.



A penny illustrates the size of small but exquisitely designed Papago horsehair and yucca baskets.

Coronado pressed so hard to arrive at his mythical seven cities of gold that he tramped over and never discovered the great hidden copper and silver deposits of Arizona. So also, early archaeologists searching for spectacular Indian ruins like the cliff houses to the north, missed one of the oldest known shelters in the United States. In 1941 a team of anthropologists from the University of Arizona in Tucson discovered and excavated this treasure-trove.

Had you traveled down a concrete highway when this cave was young, you would have had to wait for elephants to cross. You would have guarded your children from dire wolves and tapirs, and marveled at the vegetarian ground sloth, camels, and little horses. Man, his food, tools, clothing, and crafts have been traced in this cave from over 11,000 years ago to the present day Papagos who helped excavate it. It has been almost continuously occupied for all those centuries. People brought their sinuses to Arizona over 100 centuries ago and stayed at La Ventana. There is nothing there now but the cave itself. With a little imagination, however, one can look out over the landscape and see into the past.

Twenty-one miles from Quijotoa is Sells, the Papago Tribal Headquar-

ters. If the trip is made in October, one can take in an all-Indian Rodeo and Fair. There is a craft store here also where baskets and pottery are sold, direct from the hands of the Papagos. Next door, at a two-table restaurant, one can get the best tamales, burros, or chili found anywhere, made by a Papago lady chef.

Another side trip is seven miles south of Sells to Topawa (Ta-paw'-wa.) This is Papago for a type of red bean. Topawa's church, San Salano, is another interesting stop but the community house offers the paradox here. Its inner walls are painted with vividly-colored Aztec murals done by an artist who faithfully captured the exciting ancient motifs. Evidently the Papagos didn't object and although the artist has long since gone, they still live with Aztec ghosts.

Here also lives Laura Kermen, a Papago potter like no other on the reservation. Although she can and does make traditional utilitarian vessels, her forte is her own invention of little Papago scenes in clay, small islands of activity. On saucer-size bases, she puts people, animals, and ways of Papago life that are passing from the scene: beehive ovens for baking bread, corn grinding on metates, wells with buckskin buckets, ramadas, saguaro fruit harvesting,

and others. Laura is most friendly, speaks good English, and welcomes visitors. Another craftswoman is Margaret Manuel, an excellent basketmaker. She is one of several fine basketmakers in this village.

About 20 miles east of Sells is the road south and up to 6875-foot Kitt Peak. This is a sacred mountain of the Papagos. They have leased it to the U.S. Government for a national astronomical observatory. It houses the largest solar telescope in the world besides a rapidly growing cluster of other large telescopes. There are tours of the complex and a picnic area. It opens at 10 A.M. and closes at 4 P.M. At this elevation, one gets a view of the surrounding countryside. The site was picked after a three-year survey of over 150 mountain ranges because of the area's clear weather, among other factors.

Fifty-three miles from Kitt Peak, one descends a gently sloping grade to a view of Tucson spread out like a sparkling lake. At the Arizona State Museum in Tucson, the story of man in Arizona is pulled together in exhibits of Indians, their cultures, and their antiquity. The Ventana Cave story unfolds. The history of the people through whose land you have just traveled is all told here—a history of past, present and future. □

WYATT EARP MUSEUM

by Bill Thornton

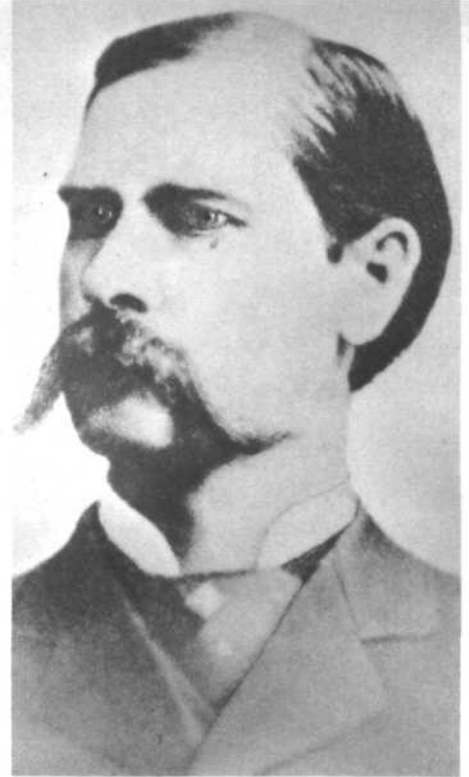
OF ALL the legendary figures of the Old West none looms larger than Wyatt Earp. This western lawman and his numerous highly colorful exploits have been the subject of countless books, magazine articles, motion pictures and even a television series. Unfortunately, much of this material has been historically inaccurate, some of it ludicrously so.

Wyatt Earp has been praised by some, vilified by others. He has been pictured as a fearless and uncompromising upholder of freedom and justice on the frontier; and alternately as a dastardly villain who used his badge and position to increase his personal wealth and further his own ends. It can be quite confusing for the layman to arrive at the truth concerning such a famous figure when so much of the material concerning him has been highly colored with emotion and sensationalism.

For those who desire to obtain a historically accurate picture of the life of this celebrated figure, I would suggest a painless and fascinating history lesson in the form of a visit to the Wyatt Earp Museum in Tombstone, Arizona—scene of his most renowned adventures. Dr. John D. Gilchriese has assembled the largest exhibit of Earp memorabilia on display anywhere. Hundreds of photographs and documents, most of them originals, tell the story of Wyatt Earp's career from his birth in Monmouth, Illinois to his death in Los Angeles.

Wyatt's boyhood days in Pella, Iowa are recounted, as is the Earp family's westward trek to San Bernardino, California in 1864. The citizens of Lamar, Missouri gave Wyatt his first job as a peace officer when they elected him town constable in January 1870. By the time Wyatt arrived in Tombstone in the fall of 1879 he had already earned a notable reputation as an enforcer of law and order in the wild Kansas cow towns of Wichita and Dodge City, and gained the friendship of Doc Holliday, the infamous gambling, gun-toting dentist, who later joined Wyatt in Tombstone.

The story of Wyatt's rather brief (less than three years) career as a U.S. Marshal in Tombstone is graphically recounted. One of his famous escapades is the O.K. Corral gunfight which, incidentally, did not take place in the O.K. Corral but in a vacant lot behind the corral and to the west of Fly's Photograph Studio. Wyatt himself referred to it merely as the Street Fight of October 26, 1881. This exhibit features the actual pistol Wyatt used in the fight and two pencil diagrams drawn by Wyatt himself, showing the location of the fight and the positions of the participants. That famous afternoon in western history is also de-



picted by a historically accurate painting of the fight scene of which prints are available.

The aftermath of the fight was tragic for the Earp brothers. Virgil, Wyatt's older brother, was seriously wounded by a shotgun blast and Morgan, a younger brother, was killed when shot from behind in a Tombstone pool hall. Morgan's death was avenged when Wyatt shot it out with and killed Frank Stillwell in the Tucson train yard. Stillwell was an outlaw and member of the Clanton gang, three of whom died in the street fight in Tombstone. This event is also recalled with a pencil diagram by Wyatt himself.

One of Wyatt's final encounters with outlaws in the Arizona territory took place at Iron Springs, in the Whetstone



Tombstone as it was in 1881 when the controversial Wyatt Earp was the lawman.

Mountains northwest of Tombstone. As head of a large posse which included his brother Warren, the youngest member of the Earp clan, and Doc Holliday, Wyatt killed Curly Bill Brocius with a double barreled shotgun blast that nearly blew him in half. Curly Bill, a cattle rustler with an outlaw reputation second to none had been bending over a pot of stew when Wyatt and the posse rode into the outlaw camp. When Curly Bill jumped to get his weapon he was fired on by Wyatt who had already leveled his shotgun. Noise of the blast so frightened the horses that the posse could not get into action rapidly enough. Several outlaws escaped in the ensuing confusion.

When Wyatt left Arizona in the summer of 1882 he was pursued for a distance by a posse from Tombstone headed by Cochise County sheriff John Behan. A deep animosity had developed between Behan and the Earps during Wyatt's career as a Tombstone lawman. The posse turned back, apparently after thinking twice about making a fight with Wyatt Earp and Doc Holliday.

After leaving Arizona, Wyatt's formal

career as a peace officer was ended. He occasionally rode as a guard with railroad gold shipments but never again wore a badge. Of the remaining Earp brothers only Virgil went on to a further career as a lawman serving as town marshal of Colton, California. Wyatt, however, engaged in a variety of activities that included racing thoroughbred horses on California racetracks, and mining and prospecting in Alaska and California.

One of the most interesting episodes from this phase of Wyatt's career is the story of how he refereed a boxing match between Bob Fitzsimmons and Tom Sharkey in San Francisco on December 2, 1896. Upon entering the ring Wyatt removed his overcoat. The crowd roared with laughter when they noticed a pistol protruding from the pocket of his trousers. As he customarily made rather large bets at the racetracks Wyatt was used to carrying sizeable sums of money on his person and carried the pistol for protection. The pistol was handed over to someone outside the ring and the fight was on. Wyatt's decision, in favor of Sharkey, was an unpopular one. There were highly vocal charges of unfairness and crooked

dealings but the decision was upheld in court.

None of these varied enterprises brought wealth to Wyatt Earp. When he died on January 13, 1929 he was living in a small modest home in Los Angeles. At the time of his death Wyatt had already become a legend in his own time and with his passing another living link with the old west was erased.

A final chapter in the Wyatt Earp story was written in April 1956 when Dr. Gilchriese discovered the grave of Wyatt and his third wife, Josephine, at Colma, California. The location of the grave had been unknown for many years.

Wyatt Earp's career spanned the most violent and turbulent period of western history. Although there will, no doubt, continue to be controversy concerning his exploits, many will agree that they were without parallel in the annals of Western Americana. The debate about his career will probably never be resolved but a visit to the Wyatt Earp Museum will do much to dispell misconceptions and should definitely be undertaken by anyone who is interested in the old West as it really was. □



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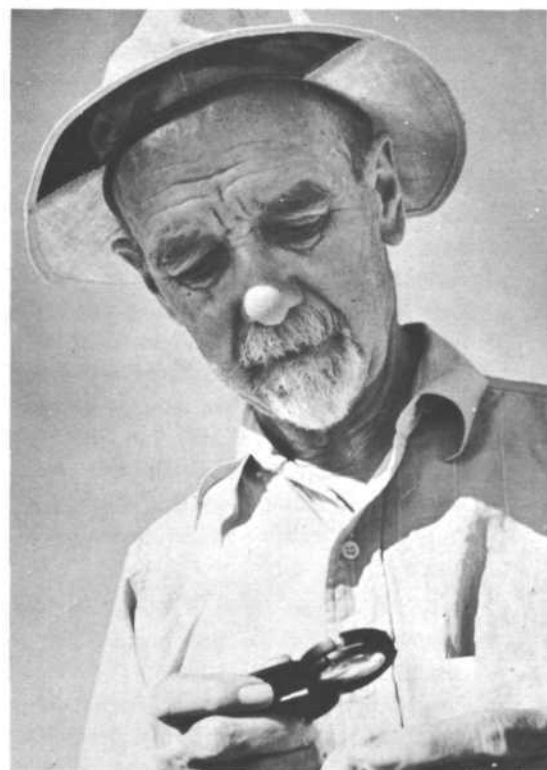
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Fifty Years

*Henry E. Wilson examines
a specimen he found in
the Borrego Badlands.*



NEAR THE close of a warm fall day in 1900, a footsore young Englishman struggled across the rugged terrain of the Borrego Badlands. The sun was sinking and long shadows creeping across the arroyos warned darkness was soon to follow. The young traveler climbed a small knoll to try to locate his companion from whom he had become separated earlier in the day. Fearful of a night alone on the desert, he paid little attention beyond a casual glance to the peculiar black stones that were scattered on a nearby hill. Suddenly, far in the distance, he saw his companion disappear around a bend in a wash. He ran to join him.

The young Englishman, Henry E. W. Wilson, was making his first trip into the desert to search for the Pegleg gold with John Collins, for whom Collins Valley was named. Henry arrived in California from London to work in the citrus groves when he was 19 years old. A few years later he moved to Los Angeles where he worked in a hotel that was headquarters for prospectors. There he heard a sketchy account of a legend which started him on a quest that continued for more than half a century.

One of the prospectors Henry met was Frank Hike, who said that he had a mine of his own in Borrego Valley which held more gold and would be easier to locate than Pegleg Smith's lost bonanza. He told Henry he planned to visit his mine

in two weeks and offered to take him along. Henry told me the idea of picking up all of the gold he could carry sounded like a tale from the "Arabian Nights."

They arrived in Borrego Valley and set up camp near Coyote Creek, then Hike left for Julian to exchange his horses for burros. He was a victim of misfortune. One of his horses was poisoned and died. The Julian hotel in which he was staying burned to the ground and with it went all of his personal belongings. Then, in a final blow to his plans, he received word that his sister was ill in Descanso and that he would have to run her ranch until she recovered. When Hike broke the news to Henry they agreed to meet again on a future date, but Henry never saw him again.

While awaiting Hike's return from Julian, Henry met John Collins who owned a small ranch nearby. Collins had not heard the Pegleg legend, but after hearing Henry's version he wanted to join him for a search at once. The collapse of the Hike venture left Henry with no desire to try again, so he returned to Los Angeles.

A few months later in Munsey's, a popular magazine of the time, Henry read a full account of the Pegleg legend, which filled him with dreams once more. "There is enough gold," the author said in part, "to satisfy the most avaricious

Continued



on the Pegleg Trail by Walter Ford

FOR FIFTY YEARS HENRY E. W. WILSON, AN ENGLISH IMMIGRANT, SEARCHED THE BORREGO BADLANDS IN CALIFORNIA'S IMPERIAL COUNTY FOR PEGLEG'S GOLD AND OTHER BONANZAS. HIS FUTILE HALF-CENTURY QUEST WAS NOT BASED ON GREED BUT HIS PHILOSOPHY OF "SOMEDAY I'LL FIND IT. THEN THINK OF THE GOOD I CAN DO."



man who ever loved the yellow god, ready for the hand of anyone who will pick it up. It lies there uncovered on the ground, much of it pure enough to be exchanged for coin at the mint. No fierce savages bar the way to it; no legal prohibitions make it inaccessible." Henry wrote to Collins and two weeks later they began their first trip along the Pegleg trail.

When Henry rejoined Collins on that first day, he did not mention the hill with the black stones because Pegleg's landmarks at that time were considered to be three buttes. He and Collins continued to Fish Springs, then worked southward along the base of the Vallecito Mountains to Carrizo Springs on the old Butterfield Stage route. Henry believed that Pegleg Smith's trail led from Yuma through the Carrizo Badlands and that somewhere in that region his landmarks would be found. He spent the next 10 years searching an area as far west as the Laguna Mountains and north to San Felipe Valley. During that time he collected every printed item on the Pegleg story that he could find. He heard many lost mine stories and mentally recorded those which would add to his Pegleg lore.

One of the stories concerned a squaw who staggered into a railroad construction camp at Salton, delirious from thirst and clutching a handful of gold nuggets. After being revived she told her rescuers she became lost in the Borrego Badlands and was wandering around aimlessly when she saw smoke from their camp and struggled toward it. Henry thought the story was true, but at the time did not connect it to the Pegleg legend. Then, during the summer of 1911 he heard about an old trail which led westward from the Yuma-San Bernardino road, across the then dry Salton lake bed and into the Borrego Badlands. This changed his whole concept of Pegleg's travels.

Henry told me he was reviewing the story about the squaw when he realized Pegleg Smith must have been following the Yuma-San Bernardino trail when he veered westward from his course and became lost in the rugged Badlands terrain. "If my reasoning was correct, and I'm thoroughly convinced that it was," Henry said, "then the source of Pegleg's gold was the same as the squaw's." He believed the squaw was traveling over the old Clark Valley-Fish Springs trail and since the only water along the route was at Seventeen Palms and Fish Springs,

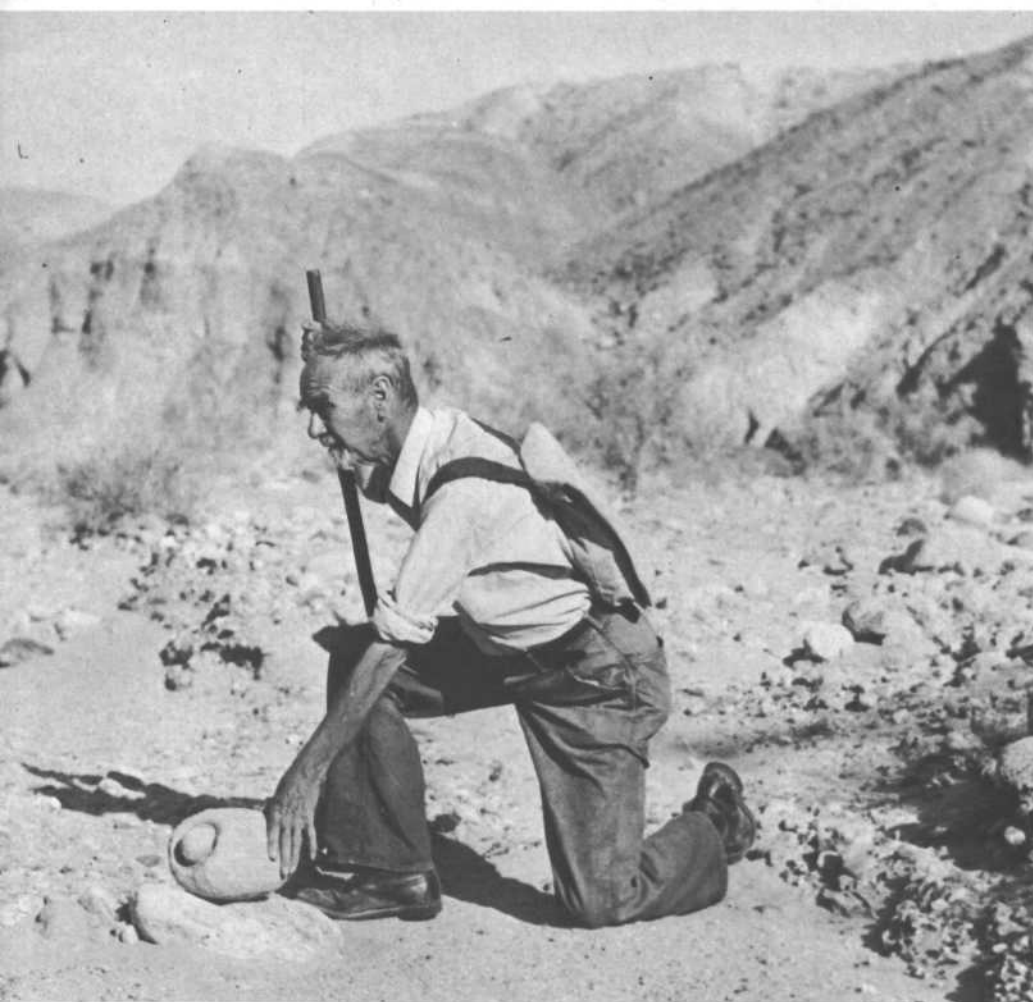
she must have become lost somewhere between those waterholes. A fact which confirmed his belief further was there was only one section of the Badlands from which smoke rising from Salton could be seen.

When Henry returned to the Badlands to renew his search, he had little recollection of where he traveled that day when he became separated from Collins. He knew they began their trip on Clark Valley-Fish Springs trail and vaguely remembered the hill on which he believed he saw Pegleg's black gold. But he could recall no landmarks to serve as guideposts. Then he began the arduous job of examining closely practically every acre of ground along the old trail. Storm waters had removed much of it over the years, but toward the end of his long search, Henry had pieced together all of the old trail except a six mile section—through the roughest part of the Badlands. In that section, Henry believed, was locked the secret to Pegleg's gold.

While Henry never abandoned his dream of finding Pegleg's gold, his years of wandering provided him with leads to other lost bonanzas, which occasionally lured him away from the Pegleg trail.

Tributary to Palm Wash which Wilson often followed on the Pegleg trail. Palm on right has been destroyed since photo was taken. Wilson traveled lightly on the trail (opposite page). A canteen, lunch and staff were all he required.





One day a friend, to whom I'll refer as "Joe" because of the events which followed, and I were working along the Santa Rosa foothills trying to help Henry join fragments of the dim trail together. Suddenly, Henry decided to move over to Seventeen Palms to search for Bill Schnacka's gold. Schnacka, a long time friend of Henry, had given him some clues to a cache of gold somewhere near Seventeen Palms because Schnacka could not spare the time from his citrus ranch to make the search himself.

Around a campfire at Seventeen Palms that evening, Henry told us about meeting a man and a woman in Arroyo Salada who were searching for the Pegleg gold. The man told Henry a weird tale about their starting to enter a narrow ravine when a woman in a flowing white robe appeared and ordered them to go back and never return. Henry's only comment to us about the incident was that the gold hunters must have been out in the sun too long, but in view of what followed later the story must have made a strong impression on Joe's subconscious mind.

The Schnacka treasure proved to be as elusive as Pegleg's gold. We got trapped in a maze of ravines in the Santa Rosa foothills and spent most of our time trying to work our way through them. At the end of a weary day we had seen nothing even remotely resembling any of Schnacka's clues, so we broke camp and headed homeward.

As Joe recounted his experiences later, he believed we should have been searching above the ravines, so he decided to return and make a search of his own. He found two of Schnacka's clues and was searching for the third, a volcanic basin, when he plunged down a dry waterfall. He could not recall how long he lay there, bruised and stunned, but darkness was approaching when he made his way back to his camp. After a quick meal he was soon sound asleep in his sleeping bag. As he calculated the time later he must have been asleep about six hours when he dreamed that he was back searching for the cinder basin. On a knoll above he saw a woman in a white robe beckoning to him and when he reached her side

Continued on Page 39

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buzzards



EVERYBODY TO his taste, and the turkey vulture's being what it is, he has to cover a lot of desert to satisfy it. This buzzard is strictly a carrion hunter, the desert's number one scavenger. Animals departing this life are not given to doing so in handy places, and hence the need for a lot of shopping around on the part of the vulture in order to find his next meal. In fact, several days may intervene between same, which is why, when the opportunity presents itself, the bird stuffs himself to the point where all he can do is sit around leaning back on his tail supporting his stomach. He can't even get off the ground unless some of the cargo is jettisoned.

Garbage collecting has been carried on by the vulture tribe for some 10 million years. The ancient Pleistocene ancestor was a whopper condor type with a wingspread of some 18 feet. Today's smaller descendants use the long-evolved highly efficient flight which enables them to utilize free rides supplied by rising air to cover vast territories without expending much energy themselves. The turkey vulture is a master of air currents and cross winds.

Its graceful soaring and sailing over the wild and desolate desert is a beautiful thing to see, and a source of wonder. It is also an exceptionally well engineered flying machine.

The turkey vulture is no pint-sized chicken. His average wing spread measures about six feet. The body is light, the bird weighing only about four or five pounds, but structurally exceedingly strong, with wings marvelously designed. Long and wide, they allow slow flight, a buzzard's wing beat being about one stroke per second compared to a swift's 55 to 75. The big expanse of wing surface gives the large area needed for the great lift. For these thermal soarers are borne upwards by huge bubbles of warm air rising from the earth.

Special anatomical features insure keeping the wings outstretched without tiring, so necessary for long-term sailing. There is an extra rigid shoulder girdle in the skeleton for sturdy support. The broad tip of the wing, held outstretched by two big muscles running from arm to handbones, is locked into position by other nearby muscles. Very long finger bones enable the wing tip to be tilted upward.

The long flight feathers lie on the arm bone in front, but hang free towards the back. They are held in place and moved by outsized muscles, which means that they can play a very important part in the flight itself. For a fast ride up, the outer primary feathers are spread open to make slots and the longest quills uptilted at the end to catch updrafts. Then,

at work

by K. L. Boynton

© 1969



closing the slots by bringing the long, wide feathers together and so reducing the wing surface and lowering the air drag, the bird goes into an easy slanting glide. Constant automatic adjustments are going on all the time, for vulture wings are the most sensitive of all birds.

The least change in air current is transmitted down the feathers to nerves in the skin and then to wing muscles—all designed to keep the wings at just the right tilt and angle for tireless soaring. Subtle twists and turning are possible because the joints at the wrists and in the fingers rotate so freely.

A turkey vulture is a very awkward bird on the ground, stepping gingerly and half-hopping as though his bunions hurt him, his shoulders hunched up and wings half held out like a great black cape. His take-off is a sight too, involving heavy flopping, for his long broad wings can't be moved up and down with ease at ground levels. He has to have a running start into the wind, clumsily hitching and stumbling along until he is at last airborne, then up he goes with a slow steady wingbeat. At about 100 feet, the long easy glides begin, the bird still climbing, wings held in a fixed position much of the time, with fewer and fewer flappings until the air ride begins at last, the bird soaring upwards in a series of small circles until it is just a dark silhouette in the sky.

Light as he is, the turkey buzzard must wait until the morning sun heats the surface of the desert and the big warm air lift gets underway. Then his food hunting can begin.

It was Audubon, the peaceful artist, who started a big international row in 1826 which is still going on among scientists. He stated that vultures find their food by sight only. Savants immediately aligned themselves into two camps: Sight Only vs. Smell Only.

Throughout the verbal pulling and hauling over the last approximately 140 years, both sides were right in a way, largely because they were talking about this vulture and that vulture, each belonging actually to two different groups: the old world Egyptian type, and the new world cathartine (condors, turkey vultures, black vultures). And while all these birds look alike on the outside, they are very different on the inside. Subsequent anatomical study and research has shown, for instance, that the old world vultures are more nearly related to hawks, while those of the new world have different characteristics.

Stager's recent work on the whole tribe showed that the turkey vulture has big outside nostrils, many smell receptors in his nose, and extra large olfactory bulbs in the brain, a part

which is devoted to handling smell news. The bird puts all this equipment to use by flying much lower to the ground when foraging than other vultures.

Gazing on a turkey vulture, one is not carried away by its beauty, a naked head and wrinkled neck with startling red skin and bristles stuck out here and there, a hooked bill, big feet and hunched up funereal feathered garb not being exactly entrancing by human standards. Nor are vulture table manners: quarreling and fighting over choice bits, hissing angrily at dining companions, wading into and gorging on recently dead or very ripely decomposed carcasses—very pretty.

It seems, however, that vulture idea of beauty differs, for indeed, housekeeping is duly set up in the spring. Mrs. V is not much of a hand for nest making, usually depositing a couple of eggs on a cliff edge, or in a cave or in a hollow tree, although she might shred up rotten wood for a softer bed, if handy.

Young vultures, surprisingly enough, are clad in long cottony white down for several weeks, making them look quite angelic. But a nest of young vultures is a very inhospitable place, for the youngsters are tough and extremely rude, facing the intruder with spread wings, lowered heads and hissing loudly. Their bills are very sharp, and they know how to use them. If this doesn't discourage company, they disgorge very smelly remains of their last meal with considerable accuracy. One does not linger about a vulture nest.

By the time the youngsters are about 10 weeks old, they have their juvenile plumage and having exercised their wings since they were first able to stand up, and being vultures anyhow, they know how to begin to practice their famous flight routine.

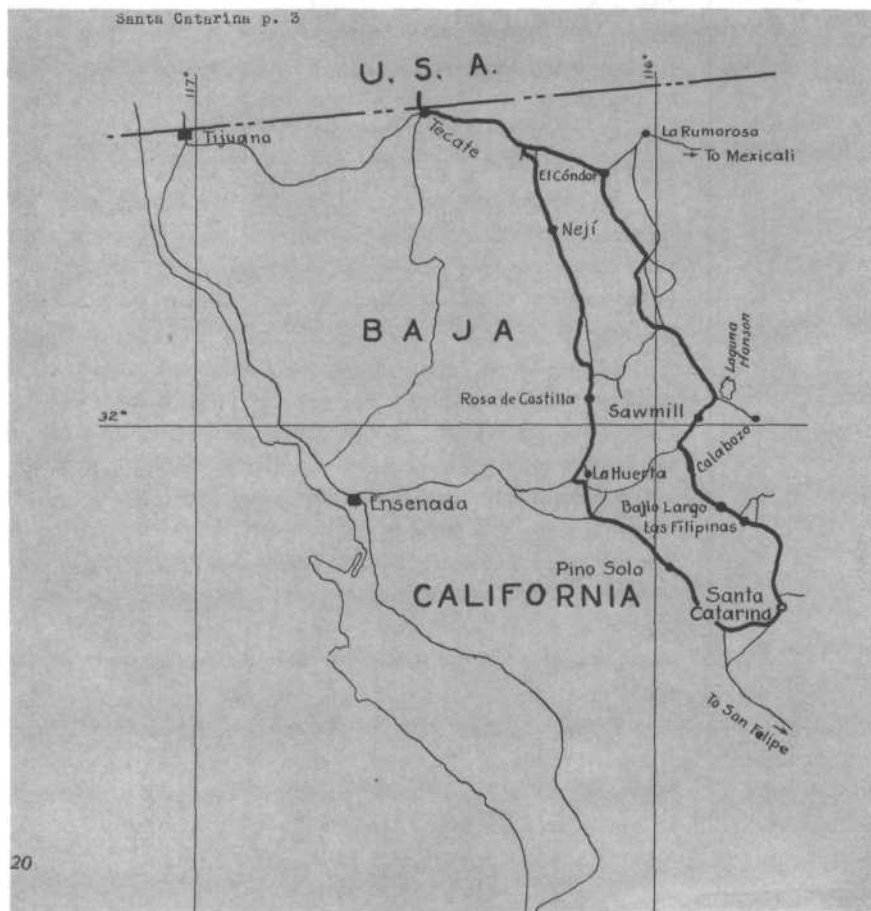
Like a lot of other animals, vultures have talents which mankind could put to use. For instance, a smart biologist had these birds working for a California natural gas company. It seems that somewhere along a 42-mile stretch through a very hot and lonesome part of the desert gas was escaping out of the pipe lines, and nobody could locate the leaks. The biologist put ethyl mercaptan (which smells like rotting flesh) into the gas, and the field men started their patrol. All they had to do was to watch to see where turkey vultures congregated, and there indeed were the leaks, the birds coming to point on the smell.

Found in other parts of the country, the turkey buzzard is best at home in the desert where the sun and rugged land forms deliver ideal thermal updrafts and warm currents for a fellow to ride for hours without flapping a wing. □



JEWEL OF THE SIERRA JUAREZ

by John W. Robinson



NESTLED DEEP in a pine forest, high in Baja California's Sierra Juarez, is a placid, shallow lakelet. Most American visitors know it as Laguna Hanson. Glimmering brightly under the sun's glare, the laguna has been appropriately called "The Jewel of the Sierra Juarez." The Mexicans, developing it as a center for their recently established Parque Nacional Constitucion de 1857, call it Laguna de Juarez.

This was our destination, this lonely laguna situated in the heart of Baja California's northernmost mountain range, just 40 airline miles south of the border. After crossing the border at the small town of Tecate, famous for its fine beer, we headed east over Mexican Route 2, a paved highway connecting Mexicali with Tijuana. Just beyond Tecate, the road climbs onto the gradual western slope of the Sierra Juarez. Chaparral-covered hills extend in broad, graceful curves as far as the eye can see, nature's monotony broken only by a few lonely clusters of oak and an occasional shallow



The road to Laguna Hanson can easily be driven in back country vehicles and pick-up campers. The author states he has seen passenger cars in the area, but cautions only veteran drivers with high clearance passenger cars to make the trip.

wash. This broad western flank of the range is in complete contrast to the eastern side, where an abrupt rampart drops a dizzy 5000 feet from the rocky summit ridge to the arid desert floor.

Just west of the small town of La Rumorosa, before the highway plunges off the eastern escarpment in a series of hair-pin turns, we turned south onto a vast pinyon-covered tableland. This flatish summit plateau of the Sierra Juarez extends for miles in every direction. Here and there huge piles of weather-beaten boulders, fairyland castles complete with towers and parapets, poke their stony crowns above the surrounding forest.

Our dirt road passed scores of eroded diggings and abandoned campsites scattered among the pinyons. In the 1870s gold was discovered in the decomposed granite soil of the region. The gold fields, covering some 30 square miles of the summit plateau, were named the Juarez Placers, in honor of Mexico's late president. Later the name was extended to the entire range. At first the placers were worked by primitive pick and shovel methods. In the 1890s three United States companies set up the latest hydraulic apparatus at La Milla, near the center of the placer fields, and extracted high grade ore for several years. Water was piped in from the nearby El Tope Valley. By the early years of the twentieth century the fields were largely worked

out, and mining activities gradually came to a halt. Today, an occasional lonesome prospector can be found trying his luck in the diggings, hoping for a bonanza that will renew the excitement of the past. But in all likelihood, the Juarez Placers will remain a quiet, sun-bleached testimony to a bygone era.

Continuing south, our road began climbing onto the higher central portion of the range. We entered a region of extensive Yellow Pine flats, punctuated here and there by small grassy meadows. A small wooden sign informed us that we were entering "Parque Nacional Constitucion de 1857." This high tableland of the Sierra Juarez is Mexico's newest national park, only the second one in Baja California. (The first is Parque Nacional Sierra de San Pedro Martir, established in 1951.)

Then we could see it sparkling in the distance, playing hide-and-seek behind the pines. Laguna Hanson seemed as a hidden jewel, set deep in a dark, evergreen forest. Driving up to the lake, we found primitive but comfortable camping facilities and a recently-constructed fire guard station. The laguna is currently being developed as a recreation center, and increasing numbers of Mexican citizens from Mexicali and Tijuana frequent the region on weekends. The lake itself is shallow, and its size varies considerably according to the amount of rainfall.

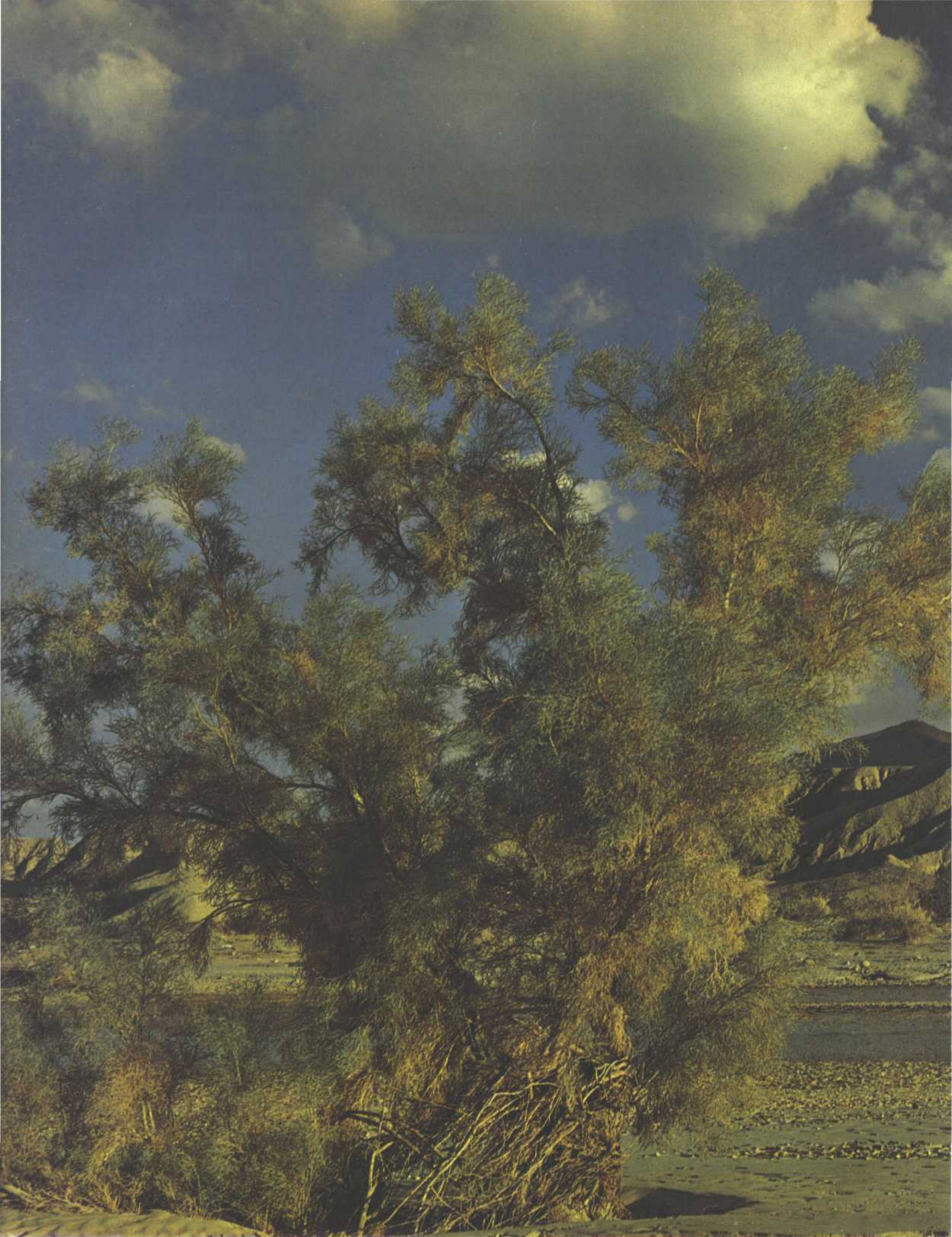
Boulders, large and small, surround the laguna and form small rocky islands in the middle. Tall pines reach right to the water's edge. Under the pines the country is flat and brush-free, making for superb campsites.

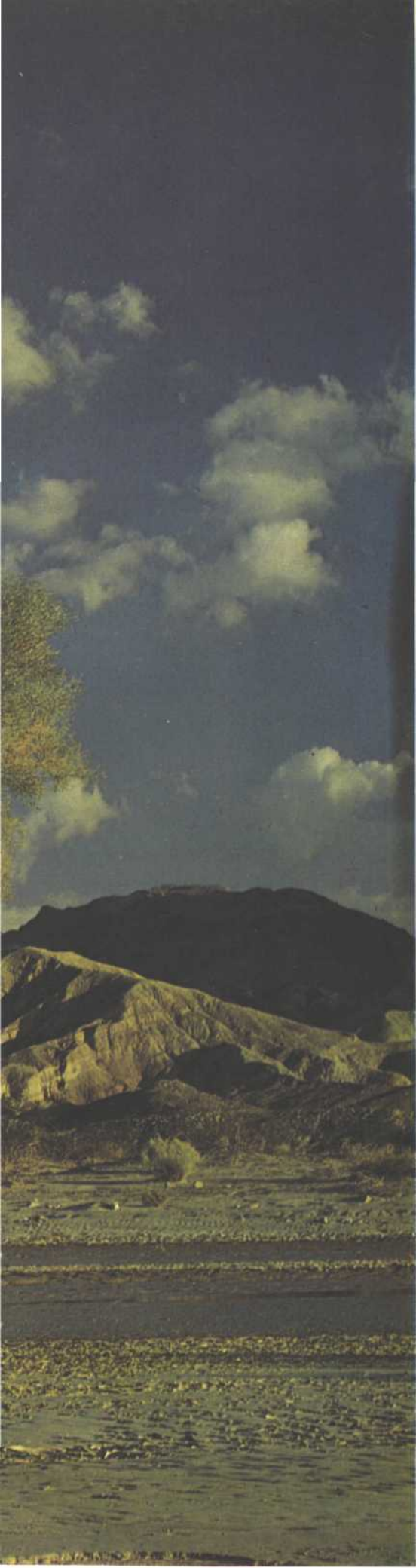
The story of Laguna Hanson is long and colorful, with a touch of sadness. It was known to the Cocupa and Pai Pai tribes long before the Spaniards arrived. The Indians often used it as a rendezvous during their annual summer pilgrimages into the sierra to gather pinyon nuts. The Spanish padres from nearby Mission Santa Caterina visited it often, calling it simply "La Laguna." By this name it was known for almost a century.

The tragic climax of the laguna's story revolves around a young American rancher named Hanson. In 1872, 24-year old Hanson visited the sierra, liked the region, and decided to stay. He built his ranch near the lakelet and soon thereafter built up quite a cattle business supplying beef to the hungry miners of the nearby Juarez Placers. In 1880, while walking through the forest not far from the lake, Hanson was shot and killed by his business partner. The murdered man's remains were buried beneath a steam boiler in Campo, a small mining town just across the international border. Later the assassin was accused of the crime and, after incriminating evidence was uncovered, jailed in Ensenada. Two months later he bought his freedom and left Baja California. Since this episode, the lakelet has borne the name of the murdered pioneer.

Instead of returning north to La Rumorosa, we drove southwest, past Hanson's old ranch at El Rayo, and descended the gradual western foothills of the sierra into historic San Rafael Valley. Northern Baja California's first major gold strike occurred here in 1872, near the small town of Real del Castillo. Beyond, we continued through the low coastal foothills and down to Ensenada, our weekend venture into Baja's northern interior completed.

Laguna Hanson is a pleasant weekend retreat, untouched by the commercialism that infects so many of our lakeside resorts north of the border. Good dirt roads reach it from the north, via La Rumorosa, and from the west, via Ensenada. It is a place to savor the pleasures of wilderness, easily accessible to southern California's wanderlust campers. □





PICTURESQUE IN its desert habitat the Smoke Tree (*Rhus Cotinus*) is a delight to the artist and photographer alike. They appear as puffs of smoke in the desert landscape.

An adult tree grows to a height of 12 to 15 feet and has a tap root of about 100 feet long. The blossoms are tiny, indigo-blue flowers. It is a distant relative of the

blossoms are scarce and so much smaller that the blooming period can actually be overlooked unless one is especially observant. And yet, at other times, after an unusually wet period, extra rain and stormy weather, the Smoke Tree bursts into full bloom and the blossoms are larger and more radiant. They seem to have a kinship with cloudbursts and floods not only

SMOKE TREE SHADOWS

by Dorothy Dial

Photographer Clyde Sorensen, Vista, California,
captured the fantasy of the Smoke Tree in the Anza Borrego desert area.

Sweet Pea. The blossoms resemble the flower of the Sweet Pea.

They are small in comparison to an ordinary tree but are ornamental with long, feathery fruit stalks or branches and appear as if covered with a cloud of smoke especially when in full bloom.

Nature provides for its own and sends cloudbursts as a means for the Smoke Tree's survival by washing away the dead trees and causing seeds to sprout. Torrential rains remove the heavy wax coating of the seeds. The tiny seedlings come up only when the sand holds enough moisture to tide them over until the tap root grows 2 or 3 feet long and the plant is about 4 inches high.

This unusual tree can be found in dry river-beds and sandy washes throughout both the low and high desert areas. They grow profusely in Twentynine Palms and in the surrounding higher slopes to the northeast, also in Palm Springs and vicinity. Here, they are cultivated to a great advantage lending an artistic touch and yet a natural atmosphere to the city. This is true in Twentynine Palms, Palm Desert and other desert cities.

They bloom from mid-spring to mid-summer in various localities; the time is governed by climatic conditions which is true with most wild flowers and other desert plants. During the dry season the

for their survival and preservation but for an abundant blooming period as well. All Smoke Trees do not bloom every year; they seem to take time for rest, so to speak, and only bloom every 2 or 3 years.

They change color too, according to the time of day and under different conditions. At times they seem to be white, plume-like against lavender mountains, a perfect backdrop for an artist. And at other times, especially in the afternoon, they are more bluish in color. The light foliage and sand, the long afternoon shadows and golden spring-time blend in special effects. And when clouds drift across the sky in late evening the trees resemble dark puffs of smoke.

The Smoke Tree loses its leaves during a dry season to conserve its moisture. They then have a dead gray color only slightly tinged with blue.

When Juan Bautista De Anza crossed Imperial Valley he remarked about the trees that looked like smoke against the sky, growing in the dry river-beds. It is believed that he was the first person to mention the resemblance which, perhaps, led to the name Smoke Tree. However, the name is quite appropriate.

This ornamental tree is fascinating to behold, but it is difficult to capture the true color and grandeur on either canvas or film—truly one of the many wonders of nature.

□

by
Annette
Tussing

HEAVEN IN HELLS



SQUATTING ON the stiff horsehide cupped into a rough boat the emaciated men battled the coiling current of the Snake River. Their rude craft slipped several lariat lengths downstream before it crossed to the Idaho shore and the other starving members of their expedition.

One hunger-crazed man, hearing of food—the remains of a horse—back on the Oregon side, leaped into the pea-green water and was swept from sight forever. It was that early winter of 1811 when Donald McKenzie called it a “cursed mad river” and invoked on its chasm the name of Hells Canyon, the deepest gorge in North America.

Where the men of the ill-fated Astor Fur Company brigade suffered, died or turned back 158 years ago, you can today travel in the safety and comfort of a powerful jet boat, the only craft able to penetrate the rock-spiked river trench, 1600 feet deeper than the Grand Canyon of the Colorado.

Hells Canyon Excursions of Lewiston, Idaho, has three 24-foot, steel-hulled jet boats which need only eight inches of water to slip over the jungle of boulders lining the canyon floor.

The minimum trip to run the white-water Middle Snake River is two days, with overnight at Willow Creek Camp, 93 miles into the virtually roadless canyon country. However, arrangements can be made to stay upriver as long as you wish—to fish, explore the trails, hike into Oregon’s Wallowa Mountains, Idaho’s Seven Devils wilderness range, or just plain relax.

Though modern boats now give you safe passage up the 110 miles of natural river, the topography of the trip remains essentially the same as when it defeated the starving fur traders.

Twenty years later it also stopped ace explorer, Army Captain Benjamin Bonneville. In his memoirs he described the

rugged region as it looks today: “nothing we have ever gazed upon in any other regions could for a moment compare in wild majesty and impressive sternness with the series of scenes which here at every turn astonished our senses and filled us with awe!”

This is some of the most spectacular canyon country in our hemisphere—cradle of a river which drops 12½ feet per mile, spawning currents up to 17 miles per hour. In the cruise, your boat climbs 800 feet and smashes through 130 rapids, with 100 of them in the last 40 miles of the deepening canyon.

The trip up the wild Snake River is a journey back into time, actually some 200 million years. This deepest river cleft in the rocky hide of earth slices down through lava flows of 10 to 20 million years ago and exposes the primal “greenstone” rock.

The Snake slashes the states of Idaho on the east and Oregon and Washing-

CANYON



Powerful jet boats conquer the rapids of the Snake River as it winds through picturesque cliffs in Hells Canyon. There are 7600 bends (opposite page) with 130 rapids during the 110 mile trip. For those who want to stretch their legs during the river excursion, horses are available along the way for rides into the colorful canyons.

ton on the west. Its middle segment, from Lewiston, Idaho, to Hells Canyon, is one of the few remaining free-flowing stretches of the once-great rivers of the West.

Yet the future of this river gorge is seriously threatened. Two governmental agencies and a combine of four power companies have been vying for a decade to dam the river and drown forever its ageless canyon. Three bills now stand before Congress—and the fate of the Middle Snake river hangs in the balance. The Hells Canyon Preservation Council, Box 691, Idaho Falls, Idaho, coordinates the efforts to preserve this holdout of America's wild heritage. They maintain nuclear power makes dams obsolete.

For a year or two at least, you can still board one of the jet boats at Lewiston, managed and piloted by businessman Floyd Harvey. Even small children can make the river trip safely—and thrill to an adventure they may never be able to repeat as adults.

From the boatdock you travel upstream and within the first mile you see Swallow Rock, the largest monolith in the inland river drainage—a giant lava rock jutting from the west shore. On its 400-foot sheer face are hundreds of mud-glued birds' nests. Nine hundred feet wide here, the river flows strongly at three to five miles per hour. For the first 30 miles, it introduces you gently to its fury upstream.

Your first stop, 18 miles upriver, is at historic Buffalo Eddy, a mecca for geologists, artifact hunters, fishermen, sun-bathers and anthropologists. At this widening of the river, generations of Indians wintered, relishing the mild climate, easy fishing and wealth of wild game. They cut into the ancient rocks a record of their activities. The petroglyphs are easily seen and photographed.

Protruding from the Eddy's sandy shores are outcroppings of eons-old greenstone. They are polished with the

sheen of desert varnish, a patina produced by water-whipped sand and build-up of chemicals. It is easy to toe through the sand around the Eddy and come up with a perfect arrowhead.

A thin thread to civilization curves along the starboard shore for 30 miles upstream from Lewiston. This road ends at the mouth of Oregon's unspoiled little Grande Ronde River, the only highway into Hells Canyon.

Heading upstream the river picks up in pace. A mountain of almost pure limestone rears up on your right. It's midmorning so you put in on a sandy strip, one of hundreds of natural beaches which scallop between the craggy basalt walls. You bite into pastries fresh from the bakery that morning, and gaze out over the river unchanged since the fierce band of Shoshones gave it their name. "People of the Serpent" they were called by Canadian tribes who first told French

Continued on Page 36



Television star Dick Sinclair and his family are among the many who take advantage of the cherry picking season in the orchards around Beaumont, California. After picking cherries you can pick your steed from a stable of horses and ride through the Cherry Valley countryside.



WATCHING THE farmers of Southern California's Imperial Valley perform their cotton picking duties, or observing the date harvesters in the Coachella Valley indulge in tree-top gymnastics, may be fun but there's more satisfaction in actually doing things. It is not suggested that you find some cotton to pick, or that you climb a date palm and pluck a tasty morsel. There is a picturesque area in Riverside County that provides a do-it-yourself picking opportunity for residents and visitors—and the product is delicious cherries.

This audience participation region is known as Cherry Valley and is located a couple of miles north of the city of Beaumont. From Interstate Highway 10, take the Beaumont Avenue offramp, or the Cherry Valley turn-off (both lead to the center of Cherry Valley). You'll find pick-your-own orchards from the north boundary of Beaumont to the Mile High Ranch, which has been here since 1942. The Mile High is the largest cherry or-

**IT'S
CHE
PICKIN'**

chard in Southern California with 20 acres of delicious Lambert cherries ready for picking from mid-June through July 4th.

During your cherry safari you may sample the product if you wish, and there will be no attempt to weigh you at the check-stand! An amusing sidelight on this liberal policy was reported to me by one of the orchard owners. Even though visitors are told that they may sample the fruit during their "pick-yourself" tour of the orchard, it has been noted that on occasion a person will hide behind a tree while eating a couple of the luscious varieties. Perhaps he feels that forbidden fruit is sweeter!

From Memorial Day to Independence Day—one holiday to the next—the picking season is in full swing; and Cherry Valley is the only location in Southern California where sweet cherries grow. Each year, thousands of families converge on this area, bent on picking this delectable fruit for fresh home consumption or for canning. The average family gathers between 25 and 40 pounds; some are dressed in farmer's garb, bringing with them their lunch, and boxes, baskets, pans, and even tubs, hopefully expecting to fill them to overflowing.

The growers provide small buckets to be hung from the neck, and ladders for reaching high branches; pickers are requested to bring their own lugs, or boxes. After picking the minimum amount, or more, the picker returns to a check station where his cherries are weighed and paid for at a price that is below retail. Most places have picnic facilities and encourage families to make a day of it.

One such place, with a large picnic area



The Edward-Dean Museum of Decorative Arts features objects dating from the 3rd Century B.C. to modern times.

ing. It started in 1943 at the time when gasoline rationing was in effect. Word was passed around that anyone who picked 150 pounds of cherries (per car) would be given a form for presentation to the O.P.A. headquarters. This government office agreed to issue, upon receipt of the form, a coupon to the picker authorizing him to purchase a full tank of gasoline. As a result, a tremendous interest in cherry picking developed.

At the present time at least 10 popular varieties of cherries are available in season here. Among these are the following favorites: Black Tartarian, ready for picking around the first week of June; Bing, about mid-June; Royal Anne, also around mid-June; Hardy Giant, around the 3rd week of June; Bing D-Andy, approximately the same time; and Lambert, the latest of the varieties, available for the visitor through July 4th. They are all sweet and delicious, and the picking of them is truly an exciting and exhilarating experience.

Any activity of this magnitude calls for a celebration, and the Annual Cherry

Continued on Page 35

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RRRY TIME

by Jack
Delaney

and 1000 trees, is Wohlgemuth's Organic Cherry Orchard, 1106 East 11th Street, at the northern boundary of Beaumont. This popular orchard has had as many as 250 visitors on a Sunday, in season! Mr. Wohlgemuth suggests that, if possible, you should schedule your visit between Monday and Friday. If this cannot be arranged, keep in mind that the early morning hours are best in order to avoid the usually crowded situation on weekends. By arriving as early as 7 a.m. you will have a better chance of enjoying a pleasant picking experience without the need of awaiting your turn.

The story of the beginning of the U-Pick system in Cherry Valley is interest-

IN SOUTHERN California there is a range of mountains called El Paso and nestled within these mountains is a canyon called Last Chance.

A spider-web of trails winds through the red, green, brown and white formations of the area. Rockhounds find jasper, agate, petrified wood and palm, and photographers capture the color of the brilliant red Paint-Brush or the Beaver Tail Cactus blooms. There are old and new mines, some with *No Trespassing* signs. It's great for a weekend of exploring.

Located approximately 20 miles northeast of Mojave in Kern County, the area can be entered in several ways. (See map on page 32.) We entered on the road across from Hart's Place on State Highway 14. If in doubt, follow the signs pointing to "Burro" Schmidt's Tunnel. (See following article.)

Towing our dune buggy behind our camper, we found a flat area between the colorful hills and set up camp. Loading our dune buggy, we were soon exploring the many trails. Our road nudged pink bluffs and then veered off through odd-shaped rocks and past several mines.

A sandy trail climbs a hill, disappears around a curve, and reappears beyond only to drop from view again. As this was the trail we wanted, we made a quick swoop to the right, clawed our way uphill, rounded a curve, and climbed some more. A stretch of soft sand was churned up from other vehicles going through or trying to, but our buggy skimmed over it.

A clump of Joshua Trees is nearby and in the spring, the ground is a carpet of wildflowers. Over a rise, across another soft spot, the road splits. Taking the left fork and still climbing, we rounded a sharp curve and after a couple of stops, my husband found the place where he wanted to hunt for agate and jasper. The trail dipped down and up again, continued over to a viewpoint and vanished over a hill. Later however, we headed back to the main road.

In the distance, the old mine was visible. High on the bluff, the metal buildings glittered in the sun. There are several trails to it.

A few years ago the scaffolding of a mine was all along the cliff and the carts



Author's dune buggy on top of one of the many rockhound hills. The area is dotted (below) with odd-shaped mudstone cliffs.



LAST



CHANCE CANYON

by
Pat
Holmes



The main road through Last Chance Canyon winds through sage and hills. Trails crisscross the entire area which is a favorite ground for rockhounds. All that is left of the Cudahy or Old Dutch Cleanser Camp (below) is cement slabs and rubble, reminders of its lively past.



and hopper were in fair shape. Now much of the wood is washed down the bluff, nor is there much left of the carts and hopper. With binoculars, we scanned the bluff. The buildings are collapsing and there is evidence of slides. In a few years, perhaps, all trace of the mine will be gone.

Not far away in a bluff is a cave. The path to it is lined with rocks where lizards bask in the sun. Nearby are mudstone cliffs with castle spires rising into the sky. Trails criss-cross the area—one led over a notch in the hills to the main road.

Pink and white formations march alongside of the road and a lonely Joshua stands guard. A side road veers off to the right and then another. We followed the second road to do some exploring, but didn't go far. Scattered throughout the flats were many campers and tents. This is a favorite campsite for rockhounds.

Back to the main road, across the wash and up on the left is what used to be the Cudahy or Old Dutch Cleanser camp. Cemet slabs keep company with rubble to mark the place where buildings once stood. After poking around and climbing a hill, we drove down the road, riding the edge of it past a washed-out spot. The mountains have colorful bands of pink and white across them. In the side of a low bluff are some dugouts. We followed a dry wash into the hills for a ways and stopped to view the scenery before heading back.

There are odd-shaped rocks of pink and white. Some stand straight up, others fold in on each other. A mine is tucked away in a hill. As the road snakes its way through the hills, it crosses and recrosses the wash. Sometimes it is hard to know what is wash and what is road. We followed some tracks into the wash and nearly went into a huge hole that someone had dug.

These are typical desert roads. There can be loose sand or washouts, heavy rain or wind storms. Cars are more limited in their exploring than motorcycles, four-wheelers, and dune buggies.

Sooner or later though, whether it's spring, fall, or winter, the rockhound, the photographer and the curious will visit Last Chance Canyon. □

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A TUNNEL

A GRADED DIRT road marked "Burro Schmidt's Tunnel" winds into the El Paso Mountains in the Mojave Desert region of Southern California. The turn-off is a few miles from the remnants of the old mining town of Garlock, on the Garlock Road which runs across the desert between Highway 395 and Highway 14.

This dirt road leads back into Mesquite Canyon past jagged black lava formations, then upward through miles of scenic hills spotted with the red, green and gray tailings of long-abandoned mines. Mesquite shrubs and an occasional grove of Joshua Trees enhance the rolling landscape. A side road to Gerbracht Camp is passed due to signs of "No Trespassing—Keep Out," hinting that mineral wealth might still be found here, its owners awaiting only a rise in prices to resume mining operations.

At each fork a directional sign points the way through the network of roads that crisscross the land. In a widening of the canyon called Copper Basin is a collection of ramshackle buildings. Here a friendly woman gives directions and provides a kerosene lantern to light the way as you investigate "Burro" Schmidt's

Tunnel. A short hike uphill and the entrance is reached. You may be a little out of breath unless you are used to altitudes above 4200 feet.

If the history of this particular tunnel was unknown to the explorer, at first it might seem that it was no different than scores of other mining ventures that dot the rich hills of the surrounding district. Only when traversing the dark abyss with the lantern's dim glow guiding your feet cautiously between narrow steel rails, can you begin to appreciate the supreme effort involved in the single-handed creation of the tunnel.

A backward glance as you penetrate farther into the weathered, partially disintegrated granite passage reveals a reassuring glimmer of daylight directly behind. You can no longer stand erect and must stoop to continue. Two side drifts are passed, one of 50 feet, the other 227 feet; they lead off into the black nowhere. The absence of timbering along the narrow cool walls is noted. A faint pinpoint of light from the entrance remains visible until abruptly 1600 feet into the mountain, a sharp right turn is made. Some 200 feet more is the exit, brilliant sunshine again and a breath-taking panorama of the Mojave Desert spreading far below.



Road to "Burro" Schmidt's Tunnel



Author uses trail bike for exploring

THROUGH TIME

by Kay Ramsey Photos by Bob Ramsey

Now is the time to pause on a windswept ledge and contemplate. You have just passed through 32 years of a man's life. One man, "Burro" Schmidt by name, working with a four pound single jackhammer, pick, shovel and crowbar, and whatever drill steel he could get, carved this lasting monument to himself almost 1/2 mile straight through the heart of 4,384 foot high Copper Mountain. No compressed air of gasoline motors were used, only the simple methods of frontier mining were employed in his years of labor.

William Henry Schmidt was 24 years old when he came to Kern County in the 1890s from his home state of Rhode Island. An invalid, with a long family history of tuberculosis, he sought health in the dry, invigorating climate of the desert. After a short period of wandering, the young man settled in the Mojave Desert in 1900, and although Schmidt knew nothing of mines or minerals, he joined the band of early-day prospectors that roamed the land. He staked several claims in the district and soon leased one promising site in the El Pasos to a Bakersfield syndicate. They drove a short exploratory drift into the mountain, then gave up, allowing the claim to remain

idle for a number of years. But Schmidt had faith in this particular location. In 1906, he began work in earnest. Following the earlier exploratory shaft, after just 50 feet of digging, he struck the only ore in Copper Mountain that had commercial possibilities.

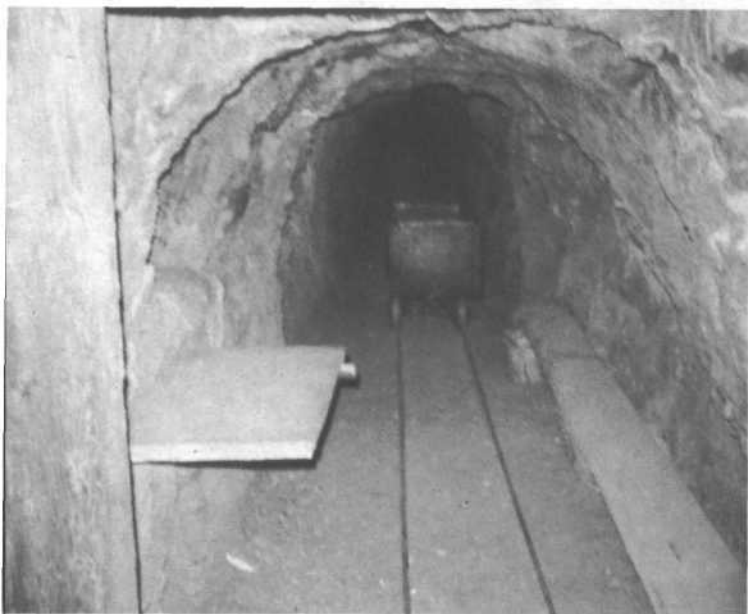
Most miners would have stopped to develop these potential riches. Schmidt didn't; instead he penetrated deeper and deeper into the earth, pushing the rock and muck out behind him by hand. His problem was simple. The claim lay far in the interior of an isolated range of mountains. To ship ore of any quantity from the mine, he would first have to build many miles of road over difficult terrain. The only alternative was to extend a tunnel straight through the mountain coming out at a point overlooking the Mojave Desert close to the existing routes.

Once started, the man's stubborn patience and determination kept him going. For over 20 summers he labored as a ranch hand in the Kern River Country to earn a few dollars. Each winter he returned to the tunneling operation, but his meager wages were never enough. He often worked by the flickering light of a candle. Blasting in the tunnel was done

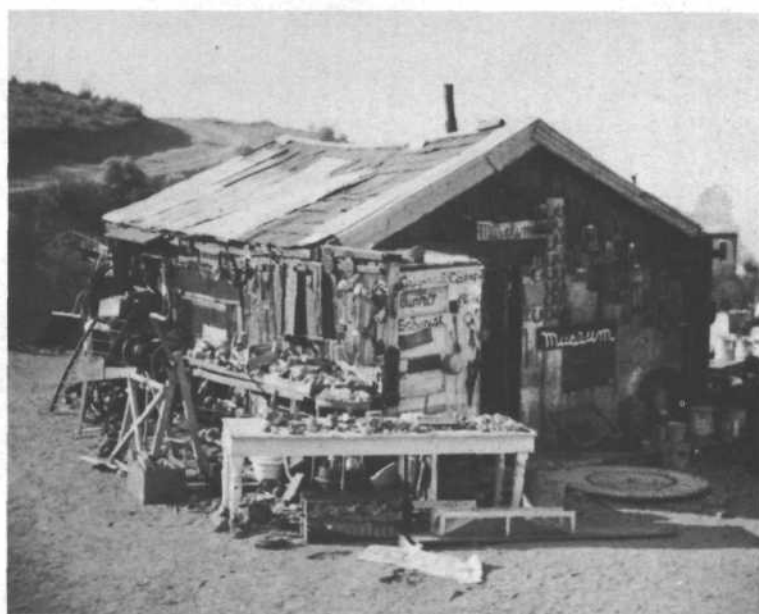
Schmidt lived in a little cabin he built near the mouth of the tunnel. Through the lean years, his two meals a day usually consisted of nothing fancier than flapjacks and beans. His only companions were a pair of burros, "Jack" and "Jenny," which he used to pull the buckboard that hauled in all of his food, water and supplies. The long association with these faithful animals earned him the nickname "Burro."

As time passed and he went deeper into the mountain, he found it necessary to bring in a steel ore car and rails. He laid the rails as he advanced, loaded the car and pushed it out by hand to the ever growing dump. Narrow escapes and miner injuries were common. Once, covered with blood, he came to a neighbor's cabin, moaning, "She nearly got me this time." After he recovered, he continued his struggle against the mountain. One of his other claims was sold and he finally had enough money to work year-round in the tunnel. There were six more with 40% dynamite and he followed the dangerous practice of cutting the fuses short so the supply would last longer. Crowbar and pick were used to the fullest extent to pry down the loosened rock.

Continued



Ore car in entrance to 1872-foot tunnel



Museum has a collection of everything

years of slow progress. Schmidt estimated that his tunnel cost \$2.00 a foot, excluding labor, to develop; and that he had put about \$44,000 worth of work into it.

One clear September day in 1938, an aged "Burro" Schmidt broke through into daylight on a canyon slope, across the divide of Copper Mountain, 1872 feet from the point where he had started some 32 years before. With this came his brief day of fame. Newspapers, magazines and mining journals carried the story of one man's super-human accomplishment. Photographs of the tunnel, of the burros, and of "Burro" Schmidt, appeared in national publications. He was dubbed "The Human Mole." Robert Ripley, of Ripley's "Believe It Or Not," wrote of him and once offered to pay his expenses to New York for a radio program. Schmidt declined with a comment that if people heard him say he had spent almost half his life digging a hole through a mountain, they'd just think he was a darn fool.

With the completion of the tunnel, Schmidt, 68 years old, turned back to

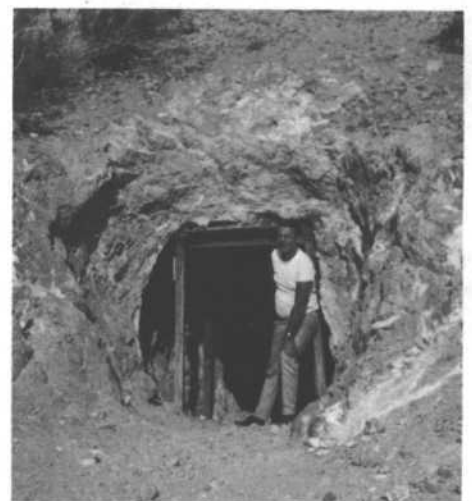
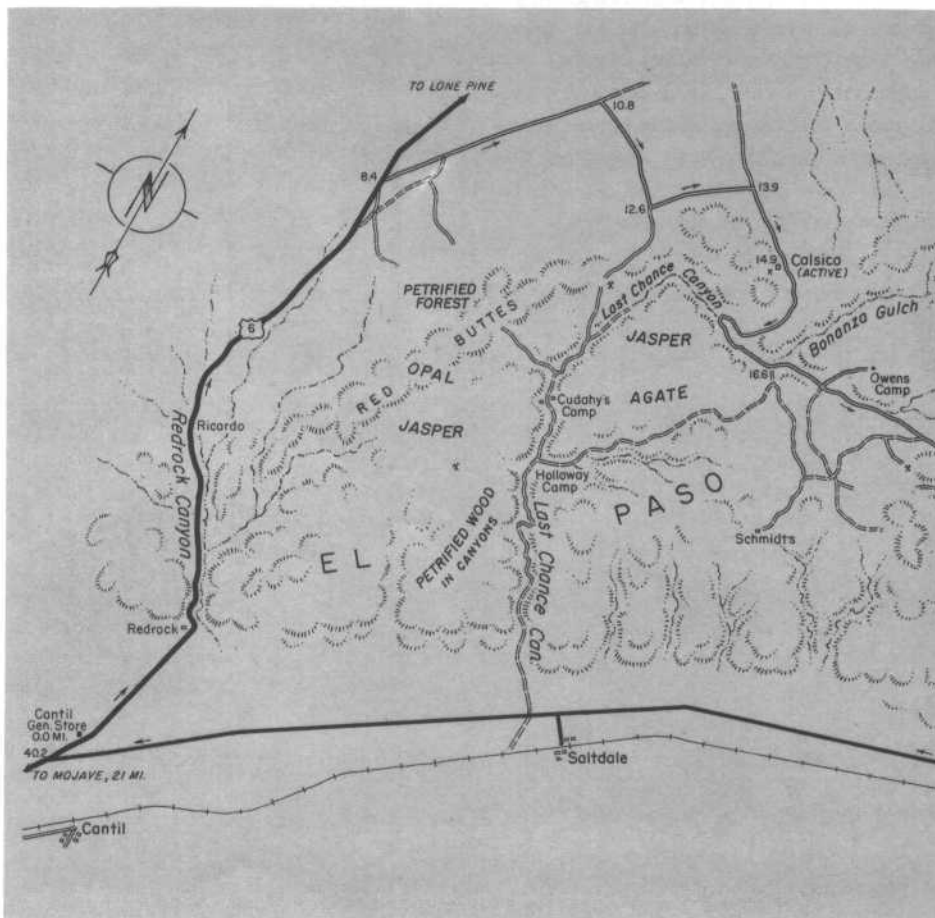
the serious business of mining. In the first months of operation he took out 20 tons of ore, averaging \$50 a ton in gold, silver, copper, iron and tungsten from his claim in Copper Mountain. The years alone had made him shy of people. The last part of his life was spent quietly working the mine and living as a recluse in his cabin deep in the El Pasos.

Four years before "Burro" Schmidt's death in February, 1954, a few days short of his 83rd birthday, he took on a partner, Mike E. Lee who sought to develop the tunnel as a tourist attraction. Picnic grounds and a camping area were set up. This became known far and wide as "Lee's Copper Basin Camp and Burro Schmidt's Famous Tunnel." The cabin was converted into a museum, housing, along with assorted hand-tools and curios, one of Schmidt's prized possessions; a wood burning cook-stove that he had bought second-hand somewhere for \$4.00 and carted in by buckboard. During the time he was working on the tunnel he figured he'd cooked close to 25,000 meals on that stove.

The mine property fell vacant after Lee's death a few years ago, and reverted to the State to be auctioned off to the

highest bidder. At this time, Mr. and Mrs. M. A. Seger were searching for a place to locate in the healthful climate of the Mojave Desert. "Burro" Schmidt's Tunnel was an answer to their dreams. They submitted the high bid, thus gaining control of the tunnel and the camp which they hoped to further develop, but Milo Seger passed away in 1964 soon after the couple had acquired the land. His widow, Tonie Seger, alone now serves as caretaker of the grounds. She is the friendly woman who hands out lanterns in the little cabin museum, and she is glad to pause for a few minutes to tell you stories of Schmidt and his tunnel. There is no admission charge, but she always appreciates donations.

You'll be pleased that you ventured so far off the beaten path to explore "Lee's Copper Basin Camp and Burro Schmidt's Famous Tunnel." Memories of a fantastic hole through a mountain and of a spectacular view of the Mojave Desert will be yours. Most important, you'll carry home a little more respect for what man could accomplish if he only had the same patience and determination as an old prospector named "Burro" Schmidt. □



It took "Burro" Schmidt 32 years and \$44,000 to dig through the mountain and reach the exit and daylight.

Town With Four Names

by Doris Cerveri



OLINGHOUSE NESTLES quietly in a narrow canyon where peach blossoms bloom beautifully in the spring and the air is pungent with the odor of sage and juniper berries. At one time important people trod its main street and hobnobbed with owners of rich claims. Now just three families share the town's memories of what was, what might have been, and what may still be.

Most communities are content with only one name, but over a period of years this gold-silver camp located nine miles west of Wadsworth and 40 miles east of Reno in western Nevada was tagged White Horse, McClanesville, Ora, and finally Olinghouse.

Although prospected as early as 1860 with some locations made in 1864, Frank Free, a railroad man from Wadsworth, made actual pay dirt discoveries in 1874. Mining activity progressed at a slow pace for several more years. In June 1897, J. L. Davies, mayor of Oakland, stirred up considerable excitement by visiting the area following the discovery of placer gold on Green Hill by Brooks McClane

and F. Plane. Their discoveries caused dozens of people to flock to the area. One claim after another was recorded and the settlement on the left fork of the canyon became known as McClanesburg. In the meantime a mining district was organized and called White Horse, but later a post office was established under the name of Ora, possibly honoring Governor Sparks who owned a claim by the same name.

To further complicate matters the town was again renamed after Elias Olinghouse who settled in the canyon to raise sheep. Previously he had been a teamster between Denver and Salt Lake. When the Union Pacific Railroad disrupted his business he established another team line from Wadsworth southeast to Belmont. Eventually he gave this up to settle in Olinghouse. Mining activity looked better to him than sheep; consequently when McClane wanted to sell some claims Olinghouse bought them, and persuaded his nephew to help him dig for riches.

Greatest production was from 1901-

1903 with Cabin #2, Forlorn Hope, and the Emma L mines as well as approximately 10 others being "in the money." Rich ore was compared to that of the Comstock Lode when one 25 pound rock yielded \$800 in gold. Some individuals believed the area would develop into one of the leading mining camps in Nevada. Although the district produced from 1902-1921 52,381 tons of ore containing about \$509,530 in gold and 12,956 ounces of silver, valued in all at \$519,450, the town never measured up to the fabulous wealth poured out of Virginia City mines. Even at its peak residents only numbered about 3000.

Olinghouse, in its heyday, sported a two-story hotel, a couple of restaurants and lodging houses, and several saloons, among them the Gouge Eye which had an assay office as an added attraction. At one time the Wadsworth Electric Light and Power Company made plans to bring electricity to Olinghouse and to build a tramway from the mines to the Truckee River where a mill would be erected.

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Plans were also proposed to have a railroad haul ore from the mines to the mill for 7¢ a ton. The entire scheme fell through and shortly after Wadsworth's shops and homes were moved to Sparks.

In February 1906, William Stevenson, a promoter, persuaded moneyed Reno people to organize a railroad under the corporate name of the Nevada Railroad Company. Ground for a mill was broken and machinery readied for shipment. Because of the disastrous San Francisco earthquake in April 1906 everything was lost. When new equipment and machinery arrived from Denver, work started on a railroad to run from Wadsworth to the mouth of Olinghouse Canyon. Construction of a 50-stamp mill at Wadsworth was completed in early 1907 and the first bar of bullion turned out at the mill was valued at \$4000.

Olinghouse's biggest event was Railroad Day, May 28, 1907, an exciting time staged by the Olinghouse Improvement Association. A four-car special train carrying 230 people from Reno and 23 from Sparks made the trip to Olinghouse. Governor Sparks and his wife cooked a huge barbecue serving 800 people who converged on the town from all directions. Horse racing, wrestling, a band concert, appropriate speeches by visiting dignitaries, and a big dance in the evening made for a successful celebration.

For a while the town boomed, then as ore was found at greater depth its value decreased, some assaying less than \$1.00 a ton. Promoter Stevenson had to close down his mill and he paid off outstanding obligations by selling a block of railroad stock. Mary Mack, wife of a prominent Reno judge, held a one year mortgage on the railroad and when the company failed to pay interest on the mortgage she foreclosed. An auction of the railroad and its equipment was conducted in front of the Reno courthouse with Mrs. Mack the sole bidder. Olinghouse's demise was certain when rails were torn up and the mill demolished in September 1909.

There was fun in Olinghouse during its development period and no lack of excitement. Reportedly Brooks McClane shot off half his partner's mustache following an argument. In retaliation his partner is said to have run him off down the canyon with a shower of rocks.

Part of the town's decline is attributed to a man named Dondero who became involved in a murder charge. His trial was held in Reno and a large number of witnesses were called to testify which took up considerable time and money. As a result very little work was done in the mines until his acquittal. Other crimes concerned horse thieves, drunks, etc.

Many individuals have returned to Olinghouse from time to time to pan for gold. George Dallimore, Reno resident now deceased, who owned a saloon and restaurant years ago, returned there during the depression and eked out a living for his family by mining gold. There are now three families who just don't want to leave.

Ray Clemmons, an 81-year-old miner who drove teams to the mining camps in Nevada just after the turn of the century, and his wife, Juanita, a retired teacher, came to Olinghouse in 1934. They live in two old cookery wagons among some sagebrush, juniper, an abandoned mill, and several old cabins. Clemmons still digs in a gold claim about a mile and a half from Olinghouse and processes the ore in a mill he built from parts left over from the town's most active days. At one time he and a couple of other men took out about \$100,000 from the Texas No. 2 Mine.

The other old-timer is Angelo Mangini, 78, who came to Nevada after taking part in the Lybian campaign with the Italian Army. He says about 25 miners and their families still lived in town when he arrived in 1918. Across the street from his wooden cabin stood the Olinghouse Hotel and further down the road was a store and school house. All have burned down, and most of the miners left, but some died.

Why do these three people stay? "This place is as good as any, so why move."

The last report of any actual mining done in the area with the exception of work done by Clemmons was in 1957, although according to the county assessor's office about 200 people paid taxes on mining claims for the 1966-67 period. Most of the ore is pretty low grade, and if there is much gold left it is deep down. Some people believe, though, that all that is needed is plenty of money to develop the mines. Riches are there, you bet there are, so they say. □

CHERRY PICKING

Continued from Page 27

Festival fulfills this need. It is a gala occasion, complete with the prettiest girl in town as the Cherry Queen. The date for the festival is set each year, usually about the 3rd week of June. After a big parade, activities are centered around Beaumont's City Park at 8th and Maple Streets. Here, growers, non-growers, and the general public rejoice over a successful cherry crop. In years when, for various reasons, the crop is disappointing, they celebrate anyway at the Cherry Festival.

In addition to the unique U-Pick attraction, this region has a number of interesting places that are well worth a visit. For instance, the only publicly-owned art gallery in this part of Southern California is here. This is the Edward-Dean Museum of Decorative Arts — Riverside County's Art and Cultural Center. It was founded in 1957 by J. Edward Eberle and the late Dean Stout, and was donated to Riverside County in October, 1964. Its location is on a beautifully landscaped site at 9401 Oak Glen Road. (This road is an extension from the end of Beaumont Avenue to the north.)

From the spacious parking area, you'll enter through a formal garden and enjoy what has been called, "The Most Beautiful Museum of Decorative Arts in California." Here, you'll stroll through eight rooms of paintings (oil, watercolor, and other media), furniture, porcelains, sculpture, tapestries, carpets and a wealth of art objects dating from the 3rd Century B.C. to modern times. Among them are pieces from the ruins of Pompeii, pre-Columbian head sculptures, and examples of Egyptian stoneware.

The Museum is open to the public six days a week (closed Mondays and holidays) from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m., and there is no admission charge. It has grown in public interest from an attendance of 500 visitors per month a couple of years ago to approximately 1500 at the present time.

Bogart Park, in the Cherry Valley region, is a fine example of one of the more "woodsy" parks that are available to those who feel the need of a one-day getaway. It is located four miles north of the city of Beaumont, in Cherry Valley. Here, 354 acres are yours to roam and appreciate, in the cool, refreshing atmos-

phere of a 3200 foot elevation. The abundance of shade (much of the park is covered by magnificent native oak trees) make this an ideal spot for relief from the heat during the hot summer season especially for desert dwellers.

Facilities include picnic tables, with a large covered shelter for groups, and individual pedestal-type barbecues at nearly every table. The restrooms are modern and clean, and the drinking water is good. There are excellent riding trails for the horse crowd. The park is listed for daytime use, but arrangements can be made for overnight groups. (Write to Riverside County Parks Department, 4020 Orange Street, Riverside, California.) When groups are present, the supervisor, John V. Dunn, gives a nature talk and slide show on Saturday nights. There is no charge here; and pets are allowed if kept on leash and under control at all times.

A pinch of history is provided by the fact that Dr. Isaac William Smith, the first permanent white settler in San Geronio Pass, built an adobe home in 1854, in the area now occupied by the Highland Springs Resort (on Highway Springs Avenue, three miles north of the Freeway.) This is the site of the Wilkinson-Hall stage robbery murder in 1862 and Smith's station on the Bradshaw and Arizona Stage route from 1862 to 1877. The main lodge of the present resort

complex was built in 1884, and survived an era when there were more grizzly bears, mountains lions, and Indians around than guests.

Today, ancient metate stones can be seen on the grounds of this modern play place, popularly referred to as the "Catskills of the West." Activities here include hayrides, swimming, dancing, singing, tennis, horseshoes, volleyball, badminton, croquet, golf, archery and bicycling. Also a supervised program for the children is provided, consisting of games, hikes, arts and crafts, and the all-American sport of wiener roasting. A stable of spirited and gentle riding horses is on the grounds for those who like to ride; and Nature has provided many trails and scenic spots in this 1000 acre fun area.

So, whether your interests run toward seeking out historic spots, relaxing in a county park, viewing art treasures of the past, or just playing "farmer for a day" in a cherry orchard, there is something here for you. It is suggested that you visit Cherry Valley. Naturally, you'll want to be in this public picking paradise during June, when the fruit is ripe for picking. However, the added attractions that are ripe for viewing twelve months of the year, make additional visits worthwhile—unless you happen to an individual who believes that life is just a lug of cherries! □



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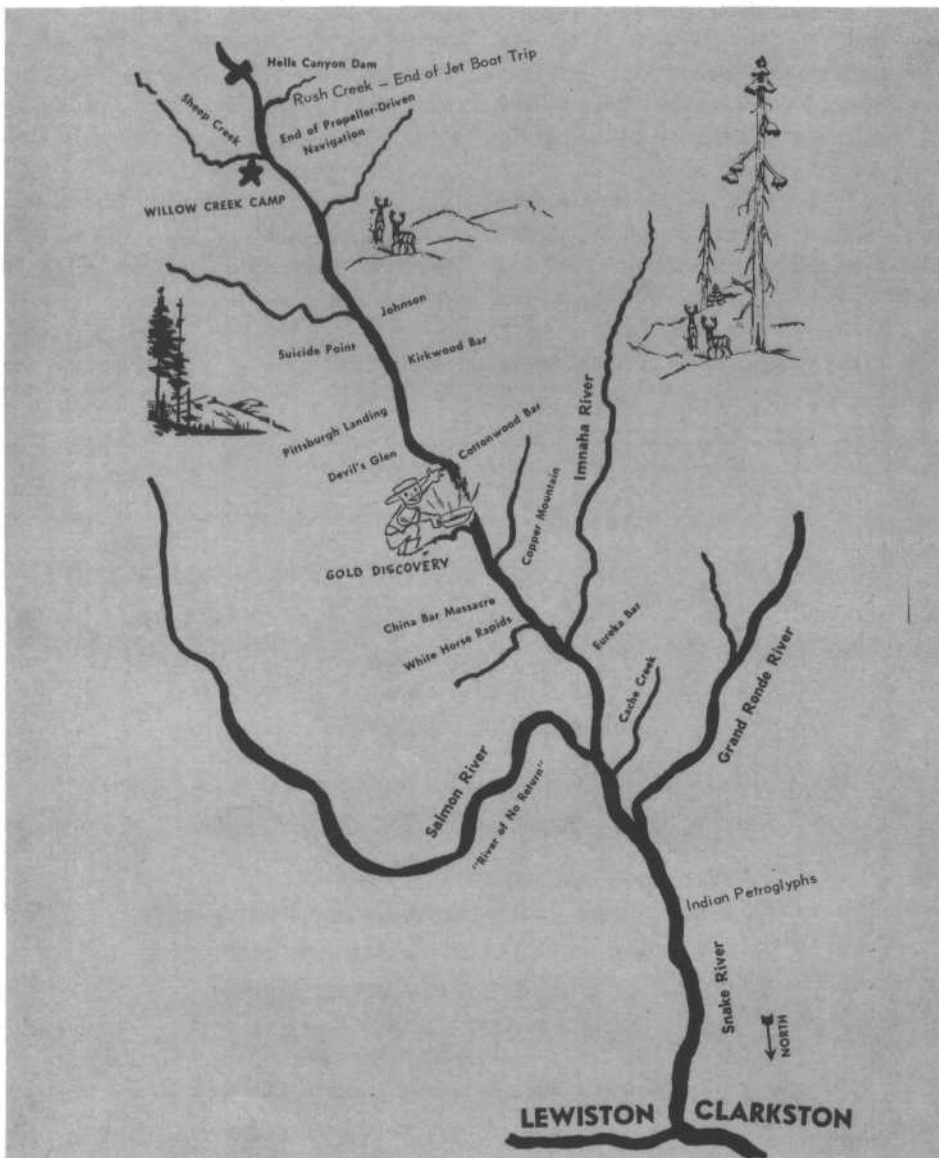
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Chinese miners of the 1800s piled ricks of stones to sift gold from gravel sluiced from the shores of the Snake River. Many were murdered by white prospectors.



HELLS CANYON

Continued from Page 25

trappers in the early 1700s of the warriors roaming a great river to the south. William Clark, of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, believed the Snake Indians got their name by "being remarkable for taming snakes."

Next stop is the mouth of Idaho's famed "River Of No Return," the wild Salmon, about which books and a movie have been written. Exploring its wilderness country could be a sidetrip after you return to Lewiston. Your pilot points out huge iron rings anchored in the basalt cliffs. In the late 1800s these held cables which steamboats used to pull through the rapids. Battling upriver some 50 miles from Lewiston, the heavy boats freighted miners' supplies and passengers, bringing back gold the prospectors were sluicing from the gravel of the Snake and Salmon rivers.

The Snake could be named for its course. Your boat rounds over 7600 bends, and each presents a new panorama of wild grandeur. In spring, you surprise dozens of nesting pairs of Canadian geese, great honkers that rise bugling at your intrusion. Summer months, you flush swimming goslings. On the gigantic hills which slope to the stream, Basque herdsmen tend their sheep flocks. If you look carefully among the cattle ranged wide over the native bunch grass slopes, you'll see an occasional mule deer mingling with his tame cousins.

Your picnic lunch is served just beyond the mouth of the lovely Imnaha River, route of the tragic withdrawal of the Chief Joseph band of Nez Perces as they left their Wallowa valley homeland for a reservation in Idaho. A sign nearby commemorates their crossing of the river in June, 1877.

Making boats out of their buffalo robes, they piled on their belongings, put children and oldsters atop the loads and towed them across the raging, snow-fed torrent behind swimming ponies. Amid the roar of the river, you can imagine the cries of the children, the shouts of the struggling horsemen, the bawling of drowning cattle. Though they saved all their people, many of their possessions and a large part of their hundreds of horses and cattle were lost.

Later, you'll pass China Bar, where renegade whites massacred 34 Chinese miners for their gold, dumping their bodies into the Snake. For this atrocity, the United States paid \$276,000 to the Imperial government of China.

With your capacity for thrilling action filled to the brim, you put in at the half-mile of natural sandy beach that fronts Willow Creek camp.

You live in tents with wood floors; sleep in bags with fresh sheets; heat cold water, piped from crystal Willow Creek nearby; eat in the mess tent, a cuisine that ranges from roast turkey and trimmings to sirloin.

There's plenty to do for all ages; swim, hunt arrowheads, photograph the scenery so friends back home will believe it, hike the good trails or seek wildflowers—one visiting botanist claims there are at least 100 species in the canyon.

With previous arrangements, you might take a horse pack trip into Oregon's snow-frosted high country. Just a three-hour hike up Hat Point trail puts you 3000 feet above the river and gives a spectacular view of land as it was first

created. Summer dark comes quickly and with it a silence you can almost touch. Far above the telescope of canyon the stars are stitched into a black velvet ribbon. The river's song serenades.

Fishing is always a highlight of the boat trip. You'll want to try for that prehistoric monster, the great white sturgeon, holdover of the armored fishes of the Mesozoic Age, 200 million years ago. The gold miners pulled out sturgeon 14 or more feet long, weighing three-quarters of a ton and 75 years old. Even today, you may land one nine feet and nearly 100 pounds, which you can hold out long enough to photograph. "Keepers" are legally only sturgeon between three and six feet in length. Smaller tackle catches channel cat, trout, steelhead, Chinook salmon or small mouth bass.

Swooping downriver, you find rapids even more exhilarating when you careen over them. You dock at Lewiston, your mind full of the wild splendor you have seen. Like the world-traveling sports editor, you may say, "Somehow, it's got to be saved. There must be a way to go back, sometime "

As featured on T.V. the experts agree:

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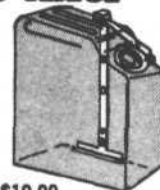
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I forgot to mention the check for \$100.00 that the Sareea Al Jamel Four Wheel Drive Club of Indio gave the California Association of Four Wheel Drive Clubs conservation fund at the Fresno Convention.

Apparently the Tierra Del Sol Invitational Safari again had more vehicles than they could handle. According to the reports drifting in there were long delays, and many people didn't get to finish the trip.

When on outings watch those young kids. At 4:00 a.m. February 22, the members of the Sareea Al Jamel Four Wheel Drive Club were requested by Capt. Del Fountain of the Riverside County Sheriff's office to assist in the search of a 3-year-old girl who was lost in the Joshua Tree National Monument. The parents had arrived at camp around 4:00 in the afternoon and missed the child around 6:00 p.m. After making the necessary arrangements with the officials we began the search, along with men from the 29 Palms Search and Rescue and members of the Yucca Valley Search and Rescue plus 100 Marines from the 29 Palms Marine Base. About 10:00 a.m. the child was found dead from exposure, a half mile from the campground. I was told by an experienced tracker that lost children will usually head up hill, regardless which way the wind is blowing.

The Indio club is working hard on their 1969 Fast Camel Cruise so do try to make it down to the Indio area the last weekend in April. The Indio club decided to move their annual event up a week to gain some cooler weather and more wild flowers.

In case you haven't heard, the grand daddy of off-road racing events, the National Four Wheel Drive Grand Prix, has been rescheduled to the first weekend in May. If you want to see every variety and invention in four wheel drive and dune buggies in competition this is one event you should not miss. Entrance to the competition is at the Van Buren Street bridge in Riverside.

Congratulations to the newly formed Palm Springs Dune Buggy Club for putting together the first really good sand dune competition event held in the Coachella Valley. The Inland Empire Dune Buggy Assn. event in the San Jacinto River bottom was washed out, so the P.S. people and the I.E. folks got together on

one week notice and threw a bash that even attracted Parnelli Jones in his buggy and a couple of the MONKEES, plus Larry Minor and his funny jeeps.

The Bryan family has a new Jeepster, and wife Carol has her eye on it for the proposed NORRA sponsored Baja

Back Country Travel



by Bill Bryan

500 to be held in June, and the Baja 1000 in November. So many girls have their eye on Baja for 1969, Carol and Letha are going to have to do some real practice driving.

Congratulations to Bob Ames on his new publication, *Off The Road Racing News*. He has his work cut out for him. Larry Hoffman is doing a real great job with his 4 x 4 And Dune Buggy News.

The City of Santa Fe Springs, California issued a commendation to the Sun-downers Jeep Club for their efforts in the clean-up of Crystal Lake in the Los Angeles Forest.

Thanks to Cap and Helen Randel of the Orange County Four Wheelers who manned the B.L.M. booth in the National Date Festival. We need more wonderful people like Cap and Helen. Incidentally, Cap and Helen are well over 39.

San Francisco Jeepers News: Road Lt. Art Strand led a trip up the Oat Hill Mine Road. The road was wet from the rain, but it didn't look too bad. Art got to a spot where the road was washed out on the right, so he steered a little to the left. Nothing doing—the road wanted him on the right side. His Bronco slid right into the ditch Art was trying to avoid. We could see this was going to be an interesting spot. After each rig made it the occupants ran back to watch the fun as the next rig tried it. After a lot of slipping and sliding all the rigs made it through. Shortly after stopping for lunch Tom Seeba noticed a funny noise in the front of his jeep which turned out to be a broken kingpin bearing.

Sacramento Jeepers: Officers for 1969 are President Jim Garrett. V. P. Russ Rodrigue, Secretary Bev Clark, Treasurer Dot Brown, State Delegate Sandy Hilton. Sacramento Jeepers have always been one of the best organized clubs in the state and we hope these new officers will maintain this spirit.

Hill Billys Four Wheel Drive Club: The Hill Billys Four Wheel Drive Club had the largest participation of any club in attendance in the public service search for the Army out of Amboy.

Be sure to reserve Memorial Weekend for the Southern District Roundup being sponsored by the Southern Area, California Association of Four Wheel Drive Clubs, in the Randsburg area, May 30, 31 and June 1, 1969. Jim Bond, an old hand at ramrodding these events, is the boss. Jim has a good group of helpers working to make this event one you and the whole family will always remember. Yours truly will have the privilege of being M.C. for the door prize drawing. We could use some door prizes and you dealers and manufacturers could not find a better way to introduce your new and old products. If you want some free publicity, just drop me a note. □

ON THE PEGLEG TRAIL

Continued from Page 17

a glittering basin of gold nuggets lay before him. As he tried to adjust his vision to the dazzling display his guide announced, "Here is the gold you seek. Now that you have seen it, your sight will be lost forever." Joe said that he awoke in panic with the thought, "I'm blind! I'm blind!" For a few agonizing seconds he stared into the blackness around him, then calm reasoning took over. The moonlight which covered the area when he went to sleep had merely given way to an overcast sky, but even with that knowledge, he said later, he was still shaking when he loaded his jeep and sped away from the scene. Joe was always embarrassed whenever his hasty flight was mentioned, but he never indicated a desire to return and continue his search.

Owing to a shortage of ready money, Henry would have other men finance an expedition occasionally for a share in the possible proceeds. Once two such backers agreed to make a trip only after he assured them that they would see no snakes out there. They were traveling at night and stopped near Grave Wash to check their equipment when one of the men saw a large rattlesnake, stretched across the highway about 50 feet away. The other men wanted to quit right there, but Henry managed to convince them that the snake was the first he had seen in all his years of desert travel.

When they reached their camp site the same man wandered away from camp, then returned within a few minutes and asked Henry to investigate a buzzing sound he had heard. Henry said he knew what was coming. Under a bush, coiled and in striking position, was one of the largest rattlesnakes he had ever seen. "You damned old liar," the man shouted, "you said there were no snakes out here. We've had enough of you." A few minutes later they were all on their way home. "We had provisions for a three week's search," Henry said afterward, "and I hadn't seen a snake out there in 40 years. Then those two had to show up."

Henry had such a profound belief in the Pegleg legend he disliked hearing it called a product of Smith's imagination.

"This is no myth," he told me, "some day I'll find it. Then, think of the good I can do." He loved the desert and to him the search had become a way of life. He was certain that someday he would reach his goal, but along the way he wanted to enjoy everything his desert had to offer.

Once I met Henry near Coyote Mountain to search for the Nicholas Swartz lost gold pocket, from which Swartz is supposed to have taken \$18,000 in gold back in 1913. The legend stated Swartz decided he had enough gold to last the rest of his days, so he buried his pick and shovel in his diggings and departed for the East. When I met Henry I learned someone had induced him to spend several hundred dollars on a large, cumbersome metal locator which was designed to locate only sizeable bodies of ore. We spent so much time and energy lugging the heavy equipment up the mountain-side there was little of either left to make an adequate search at the end of the day. This was my last trip with Henry. He made several more alone, then moved to Willits, California to make his home.

About two years later he wanted to come down and talk over something that he did not care to discuss by mail. We arranged to meet in Borrego Springs, but he never appeared. After he returned to Willits he wrote that he had taken his car to Julian for repairs and had left a note in a Borrego cafe stating where I should meet him, but I never received the message. We corresponded for several years after and he frequently mentioned wanting to try to meet again, but he never found anyone with whom to make the long drive. What he wanted to discuss with me was never mentioned and I often wondered what subject could justify the 1300 mile round trip. Had Henry at last found the secret to Pegleg's gold? I was never to learn the answer. In 1958 I heard he had passed away.

Down through the years the Pegleg legend and Henry E. Wilson became synonymous, and to him should go the credit for keeping the tradition alive. Among those who knew him well, perhaps he will be best remembered by the simple creed which sustained over his long half-century trail: "Someday I'll find it. Then think of the good I can do."

Calendar of Western Events

Information on Western Events must be received at DESERT six weeks prior to their scheduled date.

APRIL 19 & 20, RIVERSIDE COMMUNITY FLOWER SHOW, Riverside, Calif. Armory, 2501 Fairmount Blvd. Wild flowers and garden displays. Admission, 75 cents, children under 12 with parents free.

APRIL 19 & 20, KERN COUNTY MINERAL SOCIETY'S GEMS OF THE WORLD, Kern County Fairgrounds, Bakersfield, Calif. Free parking for trailers and cars.

APRIL 26 & 27, INDIO FAST CAMEL CRUISE. For information write P.O. Box 526, Indio, Calif. 92201.

MAY 1-4, FUN AND FROLIC WEEKEND, Hells Canyon, Utah, celebrating the opening of the river running season.

MAY 3 & 4, WILDFLOWER SHOW, Stinson Beach, California.

MAY 3 & 4, TOURMALINE GEM AND MINERAL SOCIETY OF LA MESA'S 20th ANNUAL FREE SHOW, Helix High School, 7323 University Ave., La Mesa, Calif. Non-competitive and non-commercial.

MAY 10-25, JULIAN WOMAN'S CLUB 43rd ANNUAL WILDFLOWER SHOW, Julian, Calif. Town Hall. Golden wildflowers celebrate the community's Golden Centennial. Art show at same time.

MAY 10 & 11, SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY GEM AND MINERAL SHOW, San Joaquin County Fairgrounds, Airport and Charter Ways, Stockton, Calif. Admission, 50 cents, children under 12 free with adult. Complete rockhound and lapidary shows.

MAY 24 & 25, AMERICAN RIVER GEM AND MINERAL SOCIETY'S FIESTA OF GEMS, Rancho Cordova Community Center, 2197 Chase Drive, Rancho Cordova, (Sacramento) Calif. Non-competitive, free admission and parking. Complete rockhound and lapidary show.

MAY 25, FLEA MARKET sponsored by the Fresno Gem and Mineral Society, Fresno County Fairgrounds, Fresno, Calif. Parking and admission free.

MAY 30-JUNE 1, GOLD COUNTRY 4WD CLASSIC sponsored by Sacramento Jeeps. Family event for 4WD vehicles held at Georgetown, California.

MAY 31 & JUNE 1, WESTERN GEMBOREE, sponsored by the Riverside Gem and Mineral Society, Alessandro Junior High School, Sunnymead, Calif. Complete show, free admission.

JUNE 7 & 8, ANNUAL ROCK SHOW sponsored by the South Bay Lapidary and Mineral Society, Torrance Recreation Center, 3341 Torrance Blvd., Torrance, Calif. Complete show, free parking and admission.

JUNE 22-28, ALASKAN CAMPER CLUB'S Second Annual International Encampment, Flying W Ranch, Colorado Springs, Colorado. All Alaskan Camper owners are welcome. Write P. O. Box 926, Arleta, Calif. 91331.

JULY 25-27, SAN DIEGO CABRILLO JUBILEE OF GEMS sponsored by the California Federation of Mineralogical Society, San Diego Community Concourse, San Diego, Calif. Admission \$1.25, children under 12, free.

The Trading Post Classified Ads

• BOOKS - MAGAZINES

"YOU GOTTA ACCOMMODATE The Public" is an account of the author's experiences in the small country store that she and her husband operated in Hurricane, Utah (near Zion National Park) during the crucial years between 1927 and 1944. A variety of people visited the store during those years; they ranged from a fanatical Nazi sympathizer and a hypochondriac salesman to salty local characters, full of their powerful home-brew and brimming over with crude wisdom. True Western Americana. Hardcover, 304 pages. \$4.95 Postpaid. Mary M. Kleinman, 556 East 100 North, St. George, Utah 84770.

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GHOST TOWN DIRECTORY—Pictures, maps, price \$1, or order free catalog, books, maps, for treasure, bottle, rock, arrowhead hunters. Pierce Publishing, Dept. T-25, Box 571, Georgetown, Texas 78626.

NEVADA TREASURE Hunters Ghost Town Guide. Large folded map. 800 place name glossary. Railroads, towns, camps, camel trail. \$1.50. Theron Fox, 1296-C Yosemite, San Jose 26, California.

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Woman's Viewpoint

SUN BAKED, POTATO CHIP CHICKEN

Here's an exciting camping recipe for "mom" who'd rather be pickin' and diggin' than standing by the camp stove two hours of every camping day! This delectable dish can be prepared the night before you leave, frozen, and made to last through two days of camping fun.

- 2 1/2 or 3 pound frying chicken (cut up)
- 4 ounces potato chips
- 1/4 teaspoon garlic salt
- Dash of pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon paprika
- 1/2 cup butter
- Set oven at 375

Melt butter; crush potato chips and add garlic salt, pepper, and paprika to crumbs. Place dry ingredients in bag, dip chicken in melted butter, drop chicken into bag and shake. Place chicken pieces on pan, skin side up. Leave a half inch space between each piece. Pour left over crumbs and butter on chicken. Bake one hour. Do not turn. Let cool. Place in your freezer until frozen and then in your ice chest for traveling. For an early dinner the first day out, spread it under the desert sun for a few minutes.

JENNY CLAUS
Poway, California

VIRGINIA SKILLET CORN BREAD

In the January issue a Yucaipa reader asked for a skillet bread recipe. This one is for "Virginia Skillet Corn Bread."

- 1 cup yellow corn meal
- 2 cups boiling water
- 1 cup milk
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 3 teaspoons baking powder
- 2 tablespoons butter or margarine
- 4 eggs, well beaten

Mix corn meal and boiling water together and then let cool. Beat rest of ingredients into the water and corn meal. Pour into 2 quart skillet or 9x9x2 baking pan. Bake 25 to 30 minutes in 400 degree oven. Cut with cookie cutter.

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Rock Show Dates . . .

When you put the dates of rock shows in the Calendar of Events they are all in the Southern part of California. Don't you know there are DESERT readers in the northern part of the state who would also like to go to rock shows?

J. R. YOUNGBLOOD,
Gonzales, Calif.

Editor's Note: Desert Magazine covers all of the western states and will print the dates of all events. Our only problem is we cannot print the dates if we do not receive them. So please send us the information two months prior to the event.

Cactus Jelly . . .

I have been going over my back issues looking for a certain recipe. Some of my issues go back to 1957 and I have had a very interesting two days searching.

I am interested in finding a recipe to use for making cactus jelly. Also I should know if one can use the green part or if it should be made from the fruit of the cactus, such as prickly pear cactus.

A dessert that went over big when I was working with girl scouts was to pour a can of apple sauce over the Gingerbread dough mix before baking as a moist topping. Bake as usual extending the time 5-10 minutes.

If any of your readers can come up with the cactus jelly recipe I would certainly appreciate it.

I hope you will keep the section of *Strictly From a Woman's Viewpoint*. If you run out of recipe ideas, why not sewing ideas, like a carry-all knap-sack or shade covers to go on trailer windows (the type that crank out)? Readers could also send in their favorite camping trip.

HARRIET HANDLEY,
Las Vegas, Nevada.

Editor's Note: We can't find a recipe for cactus jelly in the files. Could other readers help? We will run any recipes sent in Woman's Viewpoint. Reader Handley also has a good idea about other tips for the column. Anyone willing to help?

They Eat Pumpkins . . .

In reading the article *The Disappearing California Condor* in the March issue, I found the following quotation interesting:

"Like other vultures, harmless to man and beast, the condor eats only dead animals from the size of a squirrel to a large steer."

I have done a great deal of research and find that Vultures (specifically Turkey Vultures) have been known to eat pumpkin, coconut and, possibly, algae.

Your suggestions concerning artificial feeding for the magnificent condors might incorporate vegetable matter of the consistency of coconut or pumpkin. Anything's possible!

ROGER C. CRAFTS, JR.
Bloomington, Indiana.

Letters to the Editor

Letters requesting answers must include
stamped self-addressed envelope.

Doubtful Reader . . .

Some months ago I read with interest, "Sunken Gold of Clear Creek" by George A. Thompson, pp. 26-27, June 1968. At that time I felt the allusion to "Mormon Gold" was a little spurious. First of all, I wondered where a group of Mormons could have gotten hold of circa \$40,000 in gold coin in the first place, especially a group at that time, and be heading obviously westward away from normal Mormon settlement areas. Secondly, it was unlikely that such an amount would have been carried in one container—like putting all the eggs in one basket. In the late 1850s Mormon wagon trains would have been heading more likely toward the Great Basin area.

It took me awhile to get hold of a copy of Leonard J. Arrington's *Great Basin Kingdom*, Harvard University Press, 1958. Arrington is an authority on Mormon economic history and currently a professor at Utah State University at Logan, Utah. I had read some material on coining gold by the church so I decided to re-read those sections.

The Mormons made two attempts to mint gold coins in Salt Lake City. The first was a short lived attempt. It began on December 10, 1848 when the first gold dust was received for minting and concluded on December 22, 1848 when all the crucibles for the dies had been broken. According to Arrington, pp. 55-56, a church mechanic, one John Kay, made the first dies and crucibles. And it is also known he made at least forty-six \$10.00 coins.

The second and more successful attempt began September 12, 1849. This time with dies and crucibles of commercial manufacture that had been ordered through a St. Louis agent of the church. Denominations of the coins were \$2.50, \$5.00, \$10.00 and \$20.00. This operation was continued until early 1851, when approximately \$75,000 in gold pieces had been minted.

This gold coin was circulated principally in the Salt Lake Valley in the beginning, but later some found its way to California and Missouri. Arrington notes that these coins would not be called full bodied coin, as the men minting the coin were concerned with weight, and didn't understand the principle of fineness, therefore a \$10.00 coin was only of circa \$8.70 value. (Arrington pp. 71-72.)

According to Arrington's book, the first

coins had inscribed on one side "Holiness to the Lord" encircling an emblem of the priesthood, a three-point Phrygian crown over the all-seeing eye of Jehovah. The other side had the words "Pure Gold" and the denomination encircling clasped hands of friendship. Those coins minted in the second attempt were similar to the first, except the letters P.G. were substituted for "Pure Gold," and G.S.L.C. was added to stand for Great Salt Lake City.

Now I would like to point out a couple of items about the story "Sunken Gold of Clear Creek." First the likelihood that one group could have in the late 1850s collected together more than 50% of all the Mormon coined gold coin is unlikely. Secondly the inscription SMV California Gold was not used on the Mormon coins. The coin must have come from another source. Lastly, it is very unlikely that Mormons would have been heading west or northwesterly with gold at that time, or even heading east with that much. Had this been so, and it was lost they would have surely mentioned in any one of many sources of history of Mormons in or near the California gold fields. Personally I don't think Arrington would have missed that point either when he wrote the *Great Basin Kingdom*.

Nevertheless, I guess you can still say the story makes good lore for the stories and legends of California's lost treasures.

NEAL C. TORGENSEN,
Littlerock, California.

Letter to Mr. Pegleg . . .

After reading all of the stories of the latest Pegleg black gold in your area by the mystery man who found some of these nuggets, I find myself a little confused after reading *The Ancient River of Gold* by Charles Dillon.

In Mr. Dillon's book describing the original ancient channel which goes through the Borrego area and north through the Mother Lode and west through the Trinity Country, he states: "The old channel gold, when found undisturbed, is black. A nugget of this gold that hasn't moved very much since it was first laid down in the river will retain its tough black manganese coating and is literally coal black, but shiny."

I would like to ask "Mr. Pegleg" if the gold he found matched this description, especially the coal black and shiny part.

I have been led to believe the black gold that was found in the southern deserts had gotten its black color from being exposed to desert heat, but Mr. Dillon states that coal black nuggets have been found in the Trinity River Country far from any heat such that exists in the desert country! How about this "Mr. Pegleg"—can you explain this description of black nuggets with the ones which you found in the Borrego area?

C. E. MILLER,
Oakhurst, California.

Editor's Note: Don't know how Reader Miller was led to believe the black on the nuggets was from heat—our theory has always been manganese. Maybe "Mr. Pegleg"—we haven't heard from him since the January 1969 issue—would comment and bring readers up to date.

